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'THE MUSICAL PILGRIM'

General Editor *Dr. Arthur Somervell*

BACH

The Mass in B minor

BY

CHARLES SANFORD TERRY

Litt.D. (Cantab.), Hon. Mus.D. (Edin.)
Hon. D.Litt. (Dunelm.), Hon. LL.D. (Glasg.)

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE object of the Series which includes this book is to provide students and concert-goers with reliable guidance to the classics more solid than that afforded by annotated programmes. The two categories of listeners do not invariably coincide. But in the following pages information is provided which should instruct both and interest at least one of them. Reference throughout is made to Novello's octavo edition of the vocal score, though it bears unauthorized marks of expression based on the Chorus parts used at the Leeds Festival in 1886. How far they conform to Bach's directions is pointed out in these pages. An excellently clear miniature edition of the Full Score is published by Eulenburg. Breitkopf and Härtel publish the Bachgesellschaft edition of it. A facsimile of Bach's autograph Score is published by the Insel-Verlag, Kurzestrasse 7, Leipzig. The most stimulating treatise on the Mass is in chapter viii of Sir Hubert Parry's *Johann Sebastian Bach*. Others are in the biographies by Spitta (Bk. VI, chap. ii) and Schweitzer (chap. xxxiii).

C. S. T.

KING'S COLLEGE,
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The 'Missa'

Five of Bach's Leipzig compositions bear the title *Missa* (Germ. *Messe*): the Mass in B minor, or 'grosse katholische Messe', as Bach's son Carl Philipp Emanuel catalogued it, and four miscalled 'short' Masses in F major, G major, A major, and G minor. His earliest biographer, Johann Nikolaus Forkel, repeating a still earlier authority, records[1] that Bach composed five complete sets of Cantatas for the ecclesiastical year, as well as, though here Forkel is probably incorrect, five 'compositions for Holy Week', i. e. 'Passions'. It may be, therefore, not a chance coincidence that a similar number of Masses is extant; for originally the B minor was identical in form with the other four. Moreover, five detached settings of the *Sanctus* have come down to us, though Bach's authorship of all of them is not acknowledged.[2]

What did the word 'Missa' connote in the use of Bach and his contemporaries? Unlike other Protestant churches, which superseded the Roman Mass by another liturgy, the Lutherans continued to treat the 'Amt der Communion' (Communion Office) as the principal form of public worship. Outlined by Luther (1526), the 'Ordnung und Form des Gesangs zum Ampt der Communion' (Order and Mode of chanting the Communion Office) was laid

[1] Cf. Forkel's *Johann Sebastian Bach* (ed. Terry, 1920), p. 138.
[2] Four of them are in the Bachgesellschaft Edition, Jhrg. xi (1), and the fifth in Jhrg. xli.

down for his principality by Duke Heinrich of Saxony [1] (d. 1541), and, interspersed with congregational interludes (hymns, &c.), remained substantially the Catholic Mass in outline; indeed, the edition of Duke Heinrich's 'Agenda' published in 1748 describes it as the 'Ordnung des Gesangs zu der Messe' (Order of chanting the Mass). It included the *Kyrie*, *Gloria in excelsis*, Collect, Epistle, Gospel, *Credo* or 'Symbolum Nicaenum', Preface with *Sanctus*, and Prayer of Consecration (*Verba Institutionis*, i. e. St. Matt. xxvi. 26–8). Even in Bach's time, these parts of the liturgy —excepting the last—were sung at St. Thomas's, Leipzig, in the Latin of the Roman Mass. The Leipzig 'Kirchen-Andachten', or Prayer-book, of 1694 [2], which regulated public worship during Bach's Cantorate (1723–50), provided vernacular prayers for the use of worshippers ignorant of Latin. This book also, it may be observed, styles the service 'Amt der heiligen Messe oder Communion' (Office of the holy Mass or Communion).

But the word 'Missa' also had a restricted meaning. In his 'Neu Leipziger Gesangbuch', published at Leipzig in 1682, and authoritative in Bach's period, Gottfried Vopelius heads [3] a setting of the *Kyrie eleison* and *Gloria in excelsis* with the title: 'Missa,

[1] 'Agenda: das ist, Kirchenordnung . . . für die Diener der Kirchen in Hertzog Heinrichen zu Sachssen, V. G. H. [unseres gnädigsten Herrn] Fürstenthumb gestellet.' The Preface, signed by Justus Jonas and others, is dated 19 September 1536. Printed at Wittenberg in 1539 and at Leipzig in 1555 and 1564, the book was frequently revised and republished.

[2] A copy of this rare work—it is not found in Leipzig—exists in the Fürstlich Stolberg'sche Bibliothek at Wernigerode. I am indebted to the Librarian, Dr. Wilhelm Herse, for granting me facilities for having it copied.

[3] p. 421.

oder: Das Kyrie Eleison, neben dem was die alte Kirche zu Lob der Heiligen Drey-Einigkeit weiter hinzu gethan hat' (The *Missa*: or *Kyrie Eleison*, along with the ancient Church's praise of the Holy Trinity). In the 'Kirchen-Andachten' of 1694 the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* are printed together as 'Precatio Ecclesiae qua Sacra matutina Dominicalia inchoari solent' (The prayer of the Church with which Sunday morning service begins).[1] Again, in the Sangerhausen 'Gesangbuch' of 1714, in which the order of service is set forth in detail Sunday by Sunday, the invariable direction for the singing of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* is 'Missa musiciret'. The same direction occurs in the 'Kirchen-Andachten' of 1694. That Bach used the word 'Missa' in the same sense is clear from his autograph of the Mass in B minor. The inscription 'Missa a 5 Voci', in his handwriting, covers only the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. The remaining sections of the work have each a separate title. Hence, the Mass in B minor may be called a Lutheran *Missa* with additions which constitute it a 'katholische Messe', as C. P. E. Bach described it. The term 'Missa brevis' (Short Mass), often applied to Bach's other settings of the *Missa*, is therefore inadmissible. They are, in fact, complete *Messen* of the Lutheran liturgy and not Masses at all in the Roman sense.[2]

[1] p. 236.

[2] It has seemed necessary to establish the point; for the liturgical meaning of the Lutheran 'Missa' has not been understood by commentators, English or German. Schweitzer's paragraph in his vol. ii. 312, for instance, is quite uninformed. Spitta, vol. iii. 28, is equally unsatisfactory.

For the Leipzig liturgy I have also collated the 'Leipziger Kirchen-Staat' (1710) and the Custos Joh. Christoph Rost's unpublished MS. (1716).

Original MSS. of the Mass

Besides the originals of the borrowed numbers, the musical text of the Mass in B minor exists in three sets of authentic MSS.:

1. The vocal and instrumental parts of the *Missa*
2. The Score and parts of the *Sanctus*
3. The Score of the complete work.

1. The vocal and instrumental parts of the *Missa* were sent by Bach, with the following letter, to his sovereign Augustus III, who recently (February 1733) had succeeded his father as Elector of Saxony and, by subsequent election, became King of Poland:

Most gracious Sovereign,

With very profound devotion I present to your Majesty the accompanying insignificant example of the skill I possess in *Musique*, in all humility begging your Majesty to regard it, not as its indifferent merits deserve, but with your Majesty's notorious graciousness, and at the same time to take me under your Majesty's powerful protection. For some years past, and at the present time, the music in the two principal churches [1] of Leipzig is under my direction, an office in which I have repeatedly endured undeserved affronts, accompanied even by diminution of my emoluments,[2] aggravations which are likely to cease if your Majesty would be good enough to appoint me to the Court Capelle, and to give directions to the proper authority for the issue of a patent. Such a gracious response to my petition will lay me under the deepest obligation, and, in token of my humble duty and unwearied diligence, I am ready to compose both Church and orchestral *Musique* whenever your Majesty may command, devoting all my powers to your Majesty's service.

I remain, with constant fidelity,

Your Majesty's most devoted and obedient servant,

Johann Sebastian Bach.

[1] St. Thomas's and St. Nicholas's.

[2] On Bach's early troubles at Leipzig see Spitta, ii. 213 f.

The letter is dated 'Dresden den 27 July 1733', whence it can be inferred that Bach took up his MS. from Leipzig in person. He was tardily rewarded in 1736 by the office of Hof-Componist (Court Composer). The vocal and instrumental parts are in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek at Dresden, and appear never to have been used.[1] They are wrapped in a cover which records their presentation to the king by the 'Autor J. S. Bach'. Of the instrumental parts only Violin ii, Viola, Violoncello, Flute i and ii, Fagotto, Clarino i and ii, Principale, and Timpani are entirely in Bach's autograph. Of the voice parts, the Alto, Tenor, and Bass are either in his or (probably) his wife's handwriting.

2. The autograph Score and parts of the *Sanctus* are in the Preuss. Staatsbibliothek (formerly the Königl. Bibliothek), Berlin. The parts (St. 117) are in a wrapper inscribed, in Bach's hand, 'Sanctus a 3 Soprani, Alto, Tenore, Basso, 3 Trombe, Tamburi, 3 Hautb., 2 Viol., Viola e Continuo di J. S. Bach'. The chief difference between this version[2] of the *Sanctus* and that in the complete Score consists in the fact that in the latter Bach writes for 2 Sopranos and 2 Altos. Probably the separate Score (P. 13) is an earlier version. The parts include three copies of the *Continuo* (figured Bass), one of which is in C major, a tone lower than the others. On the last page of the Score, which closes, as was Bach's custom, with the ascription S[oli] D[eo] G[loria] (To God alone be praise), a note is written: 'Die Parteyen sind in Böhmen bei Graff Sporck.' Franz Anton Count von Sporck (b. 1662) died at Lissa on 30 March 1738. The *Sanctus*, therefore, can hardly have been

[1] Until recently they were in the King's Privatbibliothek.

[2] Printed in the first (1856) B. G. issue.

written later than 1737, and Spitta [1] suggests its first performance at Christmas in that year.

3. The autograph complete Score is also in the Preuss. Staatsbibliothek (P. 180). It consists of 188 folio pages written in strong, legible script, with few corrections, and is paged by Bach to the end of the *Gloria* (pp. 1–95), concluding at that point, and on the last page of all, with the usual ascription 'Fine. S. D. Gl.' That the Score was not written at one time is evidenced by the handwriting and by the texture of the paper. The Score, in fact, is in four sections, each prefaced by its own title-page in Bach's hand:

'No. 1. Missa [2] a 5 Voci, 2 Soprani, Alto, Tenore, Basso, 3 Trombe, Tamburi, 2 Traversi,[3] 2 Oboi, 2 Violini, 1 Viola e Continuo di J. S. Bach.'

'No. 2. Symbolum Nicaenum a 5 Voci, 2 Soprani, 1 Alto, 1 Tenore, 1 Basso, 3 Trombe, Tamburi, 2 Traversieri, 2 Oboi, 2 Violini, 1 Viola e Continuo di J. S. Bach.'

'No. 3. Sanctus. a 6 Vocibus, 2 Soprani, 2 Alti, 1 Tenore, 1 Basso, 3 Trombe, Tamburi, 3 Oboi, 2 Violini, 1 Viola e Continuo di J. S. Bach.'

'No. 4. Osanna, Benedictus, Agnus Dei et Dona nobis pacem ab 8 Vocibus, 2 Soprani, 2 Alti, 2 Tenori, 2 Bassi, 3 Trombe, Tamburi, 2 Traversieri, 2 Oboi, 2 Violini, 1 Viola e Continuo di J. S. Bach.'

At Bach's death (1750) the Score became the property of his son Carl Philipp Emanuel (d. 1788), who added a set of 'reichlich ausgeschriebenen Stimmen' (fully written-out parts) of the *Credo* for a performance of it given under his direction at Hamburg, prefaced by an Introduction of his own!

[1] Vol. iii. 280.

[2] Seemingly the Dresden parts are earlier than the Score.

[3] i. e. Flutes held crosswise, as at present, in contradistinction to Flutes *à bec*, blown like an Oboe. Bach uses another form in sections 2 and 4.

These parts, along with the *Credo* score and Introduction, are in the Preuss. Staatsbibliothek (P. 22; St. 118), and contain a figured Continuo, which is unfigured in the printed Score. The autograph complete Score was acquired by C. P. E. Bach's successor at Hamburg, C. F. G. Schwenke (d. 1822), from whom Hans Georg Nägeli (d. 1836) of Zürich bought it: he published a score of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* in 1833: the remainder was published in 1845 by Simrock of Bonn. Upon the foundation of the Bachgesellschaft in 1850 the Mass was intended to be its first publication. But the Nägeli Autograph not being accessible, its issue was delayed until 1856–7 (Jahrgang vi), under the editorship of Julius Rietz.[1]

The Structure of the Mass

Bach's text of the liturgy generally adheres to the *Ordinarium Missae*, or Ordinary of the Roman Mass, which consists of five sections: (1) *Kyrie*, (2) *Gloria*, (3) *Credo*, (4) *Sanctus*, (5) *Agnus Dei*. But the Mass in B minor is unique in its colossal proportions. Beethoven's 'Missa Solennis' in D, by no means a short work, contains but five movements, one for each section of the Ordinary. Bach, on the other hand, treats his text almost clause by clause, alternating Choruses with Arias and Duets, so that each section equals or exceeds the dimensions of a Cantata. The *Kyrie* is treated in three movements; the *Gloria* in eight; the *Credo* in eight; the *Sanctus*

[1] Two issues were published as Jahrgang vi: the first, or Hauptband, issued in 1856, the second, or Nachtragsband, in 1857. The second contained a revised text of sections 2, 3, 4, based on the complete Score, which was not available in 1856.

in three; the *Agnus Dei* in two; a total of twenty-four movements. They are thus arranged:[1]

I. *Kyrie*

No. 1.—Coro.

Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy upon us.

No. 2.—Duetto.

Christe eleison.	Christ, have mercy upon us.

No. 3.—Coro.

Kyrie eleison.	Lord, have mercy upon us.

II. *Gloria in Excelsis*

No. 4.—Coro.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,	Glory be to God on high,
et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis!	and in earth peace, [good will towards men].

No. 5.—Aria.

Laudamus te,	We praise thee,
benedicimus te,	we bless thee,
Adoramus te,	We worship thee,
glorificamus te.	we glorify thee,

No. 6.—Coro.

Gratias agimus tibi	We give thanks to thee
propter magnam gloriam tuam.[2]	for thy great glory,

No. 7.—Duetto.

Domine Deus,	O Lord God,
rex coelestis!	heavenly King,
Deus Pater omnipotens!	God the Father Almighty.
Domine Fili unigenite	O Lord, the only-begotten Son

[1] Words in [ ] brackets are additions to or variants of the Latin text, and in accord with Anglican use. Words in ( ) brackets are in the Latin text, but are not in accord with Anglican use.

[2] Vopelius (p. 421) has *propter gloriam tuam magnam.*

Iesu Christe altissime ![1]	Jesu Christ (Most High);
Domine Deus,	O Lord God,
Agnus Dei,	Lamb of God,
Filius Patris !	Son of the Father,

No. 8.—Coro.

Qui tollis peccata mundi,	That takest away the sins of the world,
miserere nobis.[2]	have mercy upon us.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,	Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
miserere nobis.[2]	have mercy upon us.
Qui tollis peccata mundi,	Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
suscipe deprecationem nostram !	receive our prayer.

No. 9.—Aria.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,	Thou that sittest at the right hand of [God] the Father,
miserere nobis ![2]	have mercy upon us.

No. 10.—Aria.

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,	For thou only art holy;
Tu solus Dominus,	thou only art the Lord;
Tu solus	thou only,
altissimus Iesu Christe;	O (Jesus) Christ, art most high,

No. 11.—Coro.

Cum sancto Spiritu	With the Holy Ghost,
in gloria Dei	in the glory of God
Patris, Amen.	the Father, Amen.

III. *Credo*

No. 12.—Coro.

Credo in unum Deum,	I believe in one God

[1] The word 'altissime' is found in Vopelius, but not in 'Kirchen-Andachten' (1694).

[2] *nostri* in 'Kirchen-Andachten' (1694), p. 236.

No. 13.—Coro.

Patrem omnipotentem,	The Father Almighty,
Factorem coeli et terrae,	Maker of heaven and earth,
Visibilium omnium	[And] of all things visible
Et invisibilium.	And invisible :

No. 14.—Duetto.

Et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum,	And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
Filium Dei unigenitum.	The only-begotten Son of God,
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula.	(And) Begotten of [his] Father before all worlds,
Deum de Deo,	God of God,
Lumen de lumine,	Light of Light,
Deum verum de Deo vero.	Very God of very God,
Genitum, non factum,	Begotten, not made,
Consubstantialem Patri,	Being of one substance with the Father,
Per quem omnia facta sunt ;	By whom all things were made :
Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de coelis.	Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven,

No. 15.—Coro.

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu sancto ex Maria virgine,	And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
Et homo factus est.	And was made man,

No. 16.—Coro.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato,	[And] was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
Passus et sepultus est.	He suffered and was buried,

No. 17.—Coro.

Et resurrexit tertia die secundum scripturas ;	And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
Et ascendit in coelum,	And ascended into heaven,
Sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris ;	[And] sitteth on the right hand of (God) the Father.

Et iterum venturus est cum gloria iudicare vivos et mortuos ;	And he shall come again with glory to judge [both] the quick and the dead :
Cuius regni non erit finis.	Whose kingdom shall have no end.

No. 18.—Aria.

Et in Spiritum sanctum	And [I believe] in the Holy Ghost,
Dominum et vivificantem,	The Lord and Giver of life,
Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit ;	Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur ;	Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified,
Qui locutus est per Prophetas.	Who spake by the Prophets.
Et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam.	And [I believe in] One (Holy) Catholick and Apostolick Church.

No. 19.—Coro.

Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.	I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum,	And I look for the Resurrection of the dead,
Et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.	And the life of the world to come. Amen.

IV. *Sanctus*

No. 20.—Coro.

Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth.	Holy, holy, holy, Lord God [of hosts],
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria eius.[1]	Heaven and earth are full of [thy] glory.

No. 21.—Coro.

Osanna in excelsis.	Hosanna in the highest.

No. 22.—Aria.

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.	Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

[*Osanna* da capo.

[1] Bach prefers 'eius' to the liturgical 'tua'.

V. *Agnus Dei*

No. 23.—Aria.

Agnus Dei	O Lamb of God,
qui tollis	that takest away the
peccata mundi,	sins of the world,
Miserere nobis,	Have mercy upon us,

No. 24.—Coro.

Dona nobis pacem.	Grant us [Thy] peace.

Bach's literary text, while it generally conforms to the Roman Ordinary, exhibits peculiarities which strengthen the conclusion, otherwise founded, that the Mass as a whole was not written for the Roman ritual. In the 'Domine Deus' (No. 7) the word 'altissime' is not canonical, nor is it found in the *Gloria* as the 'Kirchen-Andachten' of 1694 prints it.[1] It cannot, therefore, represent the Leipzig use, as Spitta supposes, though Vopelius adopts it.[2] Moreover, Bach himself is not consistent in his use of it, a fact revealed by a collation of the text with that of the four *Messen*.[3] Bach's divergences from the canon are more remarkable in the *Sanctus*. As sung at St. Thomas's [4] the text accorded exactly with the Roman use—'pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua'. Bach substitutes 'eius' for 'tua', from which Spitta [5] and Schweitzer [6] infer that he found his text in Isaiah vi. 3, and from it drew the picture of the six seraphim. But, in fact, Bach does not use the Bible text, which reads, 'plena est omnis terra gloria eius'. He merely appropriates the word 'eius', and may very well have done so independently of Isaiah's text. For the substitution

[1] p. 236. [2] p. 421.

[3] In none of the other Masses does Bach introduce the word 'altissime'.

[4] Cf. Vopelius, pp. 20, 1084, 1086.

[5] Vol. iii. 60. [6] Vol. ii. 322.

converts an act of ritual worship into a devotional statement agreeable to the non-ritual purpose for which originally, it may be inferred, Bach composed the movement.

In the Roman Mass the *Sanctus*, *Osanna*, and *Benedictus* form a single text, the *Benedictus* pointing to the impending advent of the Saviour in the Bread and Wine. Spitta supposes [1] that Bach aimed at giving to the *Sanctus* the liturgical significance which formerly distinguished it in primitive use; remarking that by Bach's time the *Osanna* and *Benedictus*, treated in elaborate style, had ceased to be used in the Leipzig churches. Bach, in fact, treats the *Sanctus* by itself, and places the *Osanna* and *Benedictus* in a separate section (the fourth and last) of his complete Score. Moreover, it is clear that he followed contemporary Lutheran use. There are in the 'Neu Leipziger Gesangbuch' three settings of the *Sanctus* for use 'an hohen Fest-Tagen' (on high Festivals). In its *choraliter* form it invariably includes the *Benedictus*, prefaced and concluded by the *Osanna*. But the festal six-part *figuraliter* setting does not include them. Nor do they appear in association with the *Sanctus* in the 'Kirchen-Andachten' of 1694.[2] Bach, in fact, did not write the *Sanctus* with his eye upon a Roman Catholic interior, nor has the Mass ever been heard, nor is it likely to be heard, in surroundings which demand attention to ritual observance. Bach intended the *Sanctus* to stand alone, and so it should be rendered, isolated by its own tremendous grandeur.

[1] Vol. iii. 60.
[2] Cf. pp. 238ff.

The Borrowed Movements

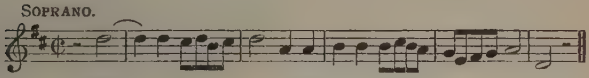
Even Bach's unfathomed fount of inspiration seems to have been exhausted by his sublime effort in the *Sanctus*. Not one of the four movements that follow it was written for the Mass.[1] Nor are they the only borrowed material. In the *Gloria* there are two adapted movements, the 'Gratias agimus' (No. 6) and the 'Qui tollis' (No. 8). In the *Credo* there are three, the 'Patrem omnipotentem' (No. 13), 'Crucifixus' (No. 16), and the *Vivace ed Allegro* section ('Et expecto') of No. 19. Excepting the 'Osanna' (No. 21), all the borrowed movements are from Bach's Church Cantatas. All of them were composed during the first ten years of his Leipzig Cantorate, and therefore date earlier than the *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. All of the borrowed choruses are in four vocal parts, except the 'Et expecto' (No. 19) and the 'Osanna' (No. 21). On the other hand, all the choruses written originally for the Mass are in five vocal parts, except the *Sanctus* (No. 20), which is in six, and the second 'Kyrie eleison' (No. 3), which is in four. Assuming that the *Sanctus* was the last original portion of the Mass to be written, the construction of the whole work can be placed in the years 1733–7.

The original of the 'Gratias agimus' (No. 6), and also of the 'Dona nobis pacem' (No. 24), is the opening chorus of Cantata 29, 'Wir danken dir, Gott', written for the inauguration of the Leipzig Town Council in St. Thomas's on 27 August 1731, and utilized twice for the same purpose [2] subsequently

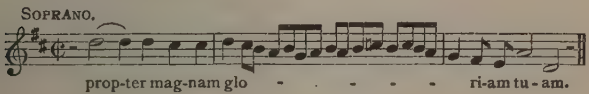
[1] The statement is inferential in regard to No. 22 ('Benedictus qui venit'), whose awkward declamation suggests its derivation from a German text.

[2] Spitta, ii. 450.

to its partial inclusion in the Mass. In the Cantata the music is set to Psalm lxxv. 1 : ' Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks ; for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.' Both in the Mass and in the Cantata, therefore, the music supports a song of thanksgiving. The tonality of the two movements is identical, though the Cantata is in $\frac{2}{2}$ and the Mass in $\frac{4}{2}$. The only important differences between them are, the excision of the jubilant Sinfonia (itself an adaptation of the Solo Partita for Violin in E major) which prefaces the Cantata Chorus, and the refashioning, wherever it occurs, of the phrase which carries the words ' verkündigen deine Wunder ', in order to give brilliance to the word ' gloria '. In the Cantata the phrase appears thus :



In the Mass (No. 6) :

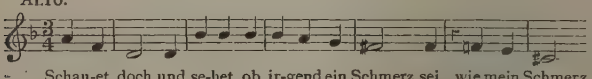


In the Mass (No. 24) :

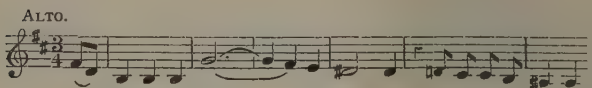
The orchestral score of the two movements differs in the addition of Flutes and Fagotti to the ' Gratias

agimus'. The former, with the First Violins, support the Sopranos. The Fagotti sustain the vocal Basses. It may be remarked that Bach omits the Fagotti altogether in No. 24 and divides the Flutes (col Oboi and Violins) between the Sopranos and Altos, a fact to which significance must be attached.[1]

The 'Qui tollis' (No. 8) is borrowed from Cantata 46, 'Schauet doch und sehet', written for the Tenth Sunday after Trinity *circa* 1725. The fitness of the transformation is apparent. The Cantata movement is set to Lamentations i. 12: 'Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow', a text naturally recalled by the 'Qui tollis'. Discarding the short Sinfonia (sixteen bars) which opens the Cantata Chorus, and a fugue *un poco allegro* which concludes it, the 'Qui tollis' is structurally identical with its original. But intenser poignancy is obtained by transposing it from D minor to B minor, and by a necessary, but very moving, reconstruction of the principal theme, which in the Cantata appears thus:



In the Mass:



[1] *Infra*, p. 47.

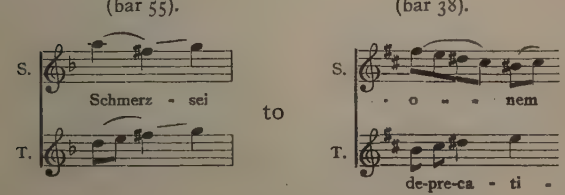
In the Cantata the voices (S.A.T.) are reinforced, from the second entry of the Sopranos at bar 13, by a Tromba (or Corno) *da tirarsi*[1] and two Oboi *da caccia*.[2] These instruments are omitted from the 'Qui tollis', nor does Bach employ them elsewhere in the Mass.[3]

The 'Patrem omnipotentem' (No. 13) is an adaptation of the opening Chorus of Cantata 171, written for the Feast of the Circumcision *circa* 1730 and set to Psalm xlviii. 10: 'According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth.' In tonality (D major) the two movements are identical. But the original has been subjected to

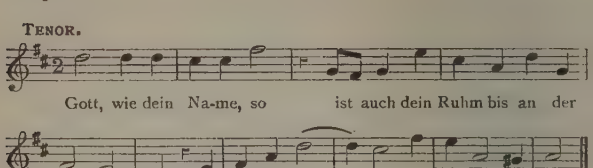
[1] Trumpets or Horns *da tirarsi*, i. e. with slide valves, were used very occasionally by Bach, chiefly, but not exclusively, to support the vocal parts. In addition to Cantata 46, they occur in Cantatas 5, 20, 67, 77, and 162.

[2] The 'hunting' Oboe was larger and coarser than the ordinary Oboe. Bach's use of it is familiar in the Matthäus Passion. Elsewhere it is found in Cantatas 1, 6, 13, 16, 27, 46, 65, 74, 80, 87, 101, 110, 119, 128, 147, 167, 176, 177, 179, 180, 183, 186, and in the Christmas Oratorio, Part II. The Corno *da caccia*, less frequently used, occurs in Cantatas 14, 16, 107, 109, 143, 174, 'Lasst uns sorgen', and 'Was mir behagt'. See also No. 10 *infra*, p. 34.

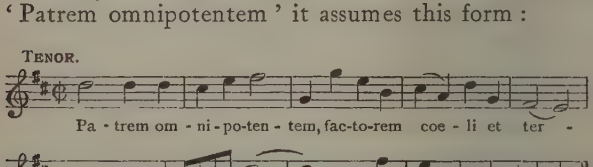
[3] Incidentally, Bach's revision of the Cantata movement revealed consecutive octaves between the Soprano and Tenor parts, which he corrected from



considerable revision. It opens abruptly with the subject:



The Altos take it up at the fifth, the Sopranos at the eleventh, and the Basses at the fifteenth bar. In the 'Patrem omnipotentem' it assumes this form:



Bach gives the opening lead to the Basses; they are followed by the Tenors at bar 7, Altos at bar 11, Sopranos at bar 17, and in these opening sixteen bars the voices not engaged in the fugue raise three shouts of 'Credo in unum Deum', one for each Person of the Trinity. The orchestral scheme is the same in both movements, and the brilliant Trumpet passages are practically unchanged. But the Continuo and inner parts, vocal and instrumental, of the 'Qui tollis' are considerably re-written.

The 'Crucifixus est' (No. 16) is borrowed from the opening Chorus of Cantata 12, written for the Third Sunday after Easter (Jubilate) in 1724 or 1725, but

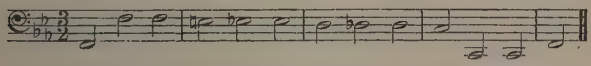
founded, it may be, on an earlier Weimar composition. The words of the Cantata movement, probably by Salomo Franck, bear an obvious affinity to those of the 'Crucifixus':

> Sorrow, sighing,
> Trouble, crying,
> Dread and fear,
> Are the Christian's daily share,
> Jesu's tender love declaring.

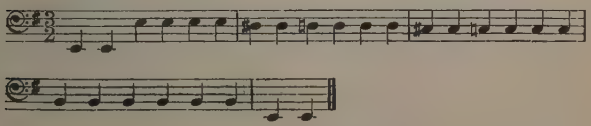
The Cantata Chorus is prefaced by a short Sinfonia of sixteen bars, for which in the 'Crucifixus' Bach substitutes an introductory statement of the chromatic ground-bass or *basso ostinato* on which the whole movement rests, and which is found, again in association with thoughts on the Passion, in the opening Chorus of Cantata 78:

> Jesu, by thy bitter dying,
> Didst deliverance bring to me.
> Now in Hell had I been lying
> Had'st thou not borne death for me.
> Thou who from the depth hast raised me,
> Through the strength thy Word doth yield,
> Be thou still my stay and shield.

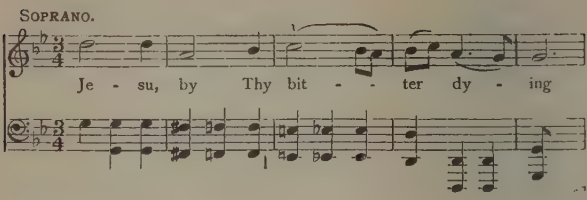
In Cantata 12 the *basso ostinato* appears, in F minor, in this form:



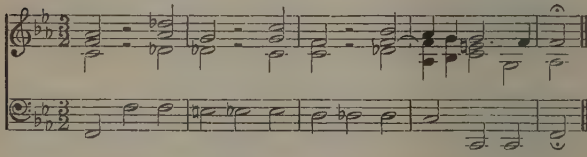
In the Mass, transposed into E minor, its reiteration is more pulsing:



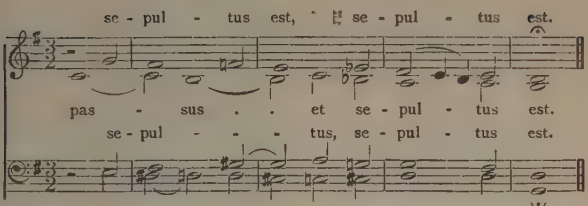
In Cantata 78 :



From the entry of the voices at bar 5 of the 'Crucifixus' the structure of the two movements is the same and textual changes are infrequent. But the Oboe, Viola ii, and Fagotto are omitted from the Mass movement, whose accompaniment is recast throughout and improved. The last five bars are one of the greatest utterances in musical literature. In the Cantata the passage is orchestral and ends in the tonic F minor :



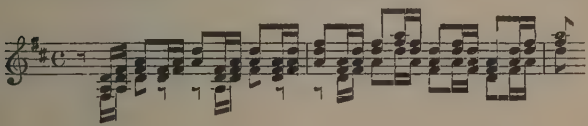
In the 'Crucifixus' the passage is vocal, with Continuo accompaniment, and by an arresting modulation into the relative G major creates an overpowering sense of awe, relief, and triumph :



The second part (*Vivace ed Allegro*) of the 'Confiteor' (No. 19) is the most masterly and intricate of Bach's adaptations for the Mass. Its original is the first Chorus of Cantata 120, 'Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille', written for the inauguration of the Town Council *circa* 1730. The words

> Joyful shout in mighty chorus,
> Let the heavens with praises sing!
> Praise our God who reigns above,
> Him exalt with thankful love!
> For his goodness
> And his gracious loving-kindness
> Through the ages ever ring.

do not directly suggest the Resurrection triumph. The link is in the brilliant formula:



which in the Cantata is developed as an orchestral Sinfonia before the voices enter. The first half of this Sinfonia is reproduced in bars 1–16 of the *Vivace ed Allegro* of No. 19. Bars 17–24, in which the voices

enter, are substituted for the second part of the Sinfonia, and at bar 25 the ground-plan of the Cantata Chorus is resumed. From that point, though the voice parts are almost completely re-written, the Continuo foundation of the two movements is the same until bar 61, when the episode introduced at bars 17–24 is repeated. At bar 69 the Cantata scheme is again resumed, the parts, as before, being practically re-written, and so continues till the end. The conclusion of the 'Et expecto', however, is not that of the Cantata Chorus, which, after repeating the opening Sinfonia, develops a middle section, followed by the usual *Da Capo*. The Flutes are an addition to the orchestral score, and in the Cantata the Oboes are *d'amore*.

The 'Osanna' (No. 21) is taken bodily from the opening chorus of the 'Cantata gratulatoria', 'Preise dein Glücke, gesegnetes Sachsen', composed to celebrate, on 5 October 1734, the accession of Augustus III, who on the occasion paid an official visit to Leipzig, but whose preoccupation in the Polish Election War as yet prevented him from granting the petition preferred by Bach fifteen months earlier. The text of the Cantata expresses the fulsome banality that marked official utterances on these ceremonial occasions:

> Happy thy fortune, O Saxony blessèd,
> For God doth thy Prince's
> Throne firm sustain.
> Happy thy land!
> Give thanks to heaven!
> Come, kiss now the hand
> By which thy welfare is daily increasèd,
> And all thy borders in surety remain.

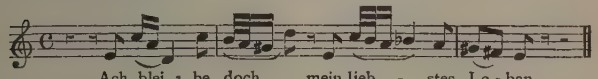
Bach clearly desired to impress his sovereign by

a display of his fullest powers and of the musical resources he controlled. Nowhere else among the secular Cantatas is there a Chorus which approaches this in proportions or grandeur. The most insignificant alterations in the voice parts alone were necessary to adapt it to the Mass. The orchestral score also remains the same. The adapted movement brilliantly and sincerely voices the jubilation and welcome of the *Benedictus*, though in a text originally remote from its ritual significance.[1]

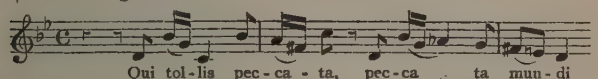
Both numbers of the *Agnus Dei* are founded upon borrowed material. The subject of the Alto Aria (No. 23) is taken from the Alto Aria in the Ascension Oratorio (Cantata 11), written *circa* 1735 :

> Ah, leave me not, my dearest treasure,
> O ne'er depart so soon from me !
> This parting is such bitter anguish,
> Without thee must my sad soul languish.
> Let me, dear Lord, thy face still see,
> Else here to live I have no pleasure.

Transposed from A minor to G minor, the borrowed theme is considerably improved and compacted by its adaptation to the Latin words. In the Cantata it appears thus :



In the 'Agnus Dei' :



[1] Bach makes no use of the middle section of the Cantata movement.

To the voice Bach assigns an additional subject, whose association with the Cantata theme compelled a complete recasting of the original movement. As in the Cantata, the *obbligato* is played by the Violins in unison.

The second movement of the *Agnus Dei* (No. 24), and concluding number of the Mass, is, apart from the words and minor details, identical with No. 6 ('Gratias agimus'). From the orchestral score, however, the Fagotti are omitted.

Except in so far as it illuminates the ways of genius, it is of no aesthetic value to discover the proportion of original to borrowed material. The Mass is the design of a superb architect, perfect in proportion and balance. Even in their adaptation the borrowed movements reveal his creative genius, while a collation of them with their originals exposes the sensitiveness of his judgement and self-criticism.[1]

Bach's Purpose in the Mass

Discussing the impulses that moved Bach to compose the Mass, Spitta [2] detects them in his connexion with a Catholic Court at Dresden, and in confirmation points to three or four Masses by Italian composers copied out by Bach himself. The deduction is obvious but ill-founded. Bach's interest in his art was eclectic and insatiable; his study of Caldara, Lotti, or Palestrina was certainly not dictated by his allegiance to a Roman Catholic sovereign. Moreover, the B minor is the only Catholic Mass he wrote; only its *Missa*

[1] In round numbers there are 2,300 bars in the Mass. Rather less than one-third of them (638) are in the borrowed movements, including the 'Benedictus' (No. 22) among the latter.

[2] Vol. iii. 28.

was ever sent to Dresden; its proportions forbade ritual use; and both its construction and text, as has been shown, closed Catholic doors against it. Bach's purpose in writing the *Missa* is not in doubt. What impulse moved him to complete it?

There are two answers, which in fact are complementary. In the first place, the Mass is the expression of Bach's Christian idealism, neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant. Some movements, e.g. the 'Credo' (No. 12) and 'Confiteor' (No. 19), exhale a Roman atmosphere. Others, and in particular the Arias, are conceived in the subjective, intimate mood of the Lutheran Cantatas. But invariably Bach's inspiration is from within himself. It is not as the servant of a Creed but as a Christian that he illustrates the Unity of Father and Son in No. 7, subtly differentiates the Persons of the Trinity in No. 14, bends before the mystery of the Incarnation in No. 15, raises a cry for pardon in No. 1, and declares the impregnable foundation of his faith in No. 12.

But devotional impulse was reinforced by another equally individual. Bach's genius was Teutonic in its inclination to create a clearly pictured design. As a young man he wrote the 'Orgelbüchlein', a work of little practical use, but complete and comprehensive in plan.[1] Towards the close of his life, in the third part of the 'Clavierübung', he assembled certain of his compositions in order to provide a musical exposition of Lutheran dogma, and prefaced it characteristically with a threefold musical invocation of the Trinity.[2] It detracts nothing from the grandeur of Bach's achievement to discover in the Mass evidence of a similar impulse to complete a design. A desire to

[1] Cf. Terry, *Bach's Chorals*, iii. 18 f.
[2] *Ibid.*, iii. 66.

express himself in an art-form which he had studied in others may also be conjectured.

But the absence of a practical motive for the construction of the Mass as a whole does not attach to its individual movements. It has already been pointed out that the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, and *Sanctus* were sung in the Lutheran ritual. The length of the B minor *Kyrie* and *Gloria* must have precluded their performance on ordinary occasions. But the *Kyrie* may have been heard on Trinity Sundays, though the 'Kirchen-Andachten' of 1694 do not prescribe it.[1] As to the *Gloria*, Bach, as we learn from a separate Score, used Nos. 4, 7, and 11 as a Cantata on Christmas Day in 1740, replacing the words of Nos. 7 and 11 by those of the Doxology ('Gloria Patri', &c.). The rubric 'Post Orationem' above No. 7 shows that the performance was divided by the Sermon.

It may be observed that Bach introduces two of the Latin Intonations into the Mass—that of the 'Credo' in No. 12, and of the 'Confiteor' in No. 19. The ordinary practice was for the Creed to be intoned at the altar by the minister, except on the principal feast days, when 'Wir glauben all' an einen Gott' only was sung. But it is not improbable that the B minor *Credo* was heard in St. Thomas's at festal seasons.[2] Of the *Sanctus* Vopelius prints three versions, the last of which,[3] like the B minor movement,

[1] Spitta, iii. 26, finds 'certain evidence' of concerted performances of the *Kyrie* on the first Sunday in Advent and the Reformation Festival. The 'Kirchen-Andachten', however, and also the 'Leipziger Kirchen-Staat' of 1710, show that the *Kyrie* was 'musicirt' on ordinary Sundays. The chief concerted music for the Reformation Festival was the special Cantata and the *Te Deum*.

[2] Spitta, iii. 27, shows that a *Credo* by Haydn was sung on Trinity Sunday 1780.

[3] p. 1092.

is in six vocal parts, a fact which may have suggested Bach's choice of that number of voices, though it is usual to attribute it to his vision of the six-winged seraphim. The existence of a separate Score and parts of the *Sanctus* in itself infers a performance under Bach's direction. In regard to the *Benedictus*, it has already been pointed out that the words survived in Leipzig use in association with the *Sanctus* when the latter was sung *choraliter*. On the Feast of the Epiphany 1780 it was sung to a setting by Haydn,[1] and there can be no doubt that Bach's also was heard in St. Thomas's. In 1780 the *Agnus Dei* also was sung,[2] and a rubric in the 'Agenda' of 1564[3] probably reveals its position in the Service: 'Auff die Festa, und so die Communicanten viel sind, mag man auch singen das Lateinisch Agnus Dei' ('Upon Feast-days, and whenever the communicants are numerous, the Latin *Agnus Dei* may also be sung', i. e. while the communicants were receiving the Bread and Wine). Thus in regard to none of the movements of the Mass is it necessary to postulate a non-Lutheran purpose in order to explain their composition.

The Movements of the Mass

The popular conception of Bach as cold and academic draws a veil between those who hold it and a sympathetic understanding of his art. He was, in fact, an incorrigible romanticist, extraordinarily sensitive to literary suggestion, easily inspired to pictorial illustration, and as rapidly moved to give it musical expression, not infrequently irrelevantly to his *libretto* as a whole. In his use of the orchestra,

[1] Spitta, iii. 27. [2] *Ibid.* [3] p. lvi a.

as Sir Hubert Parry points out,[1] Bach, like Handel, hardly crossed the threshold of that art, and did little to exploit or contrast the qualities of orchestral tone. His pigments are idiomatic rhythms rather than tonal contrasts. But he is none the less a colourist, though he etched in line. The Mass will not be intelligible to the hearer unless these facts are admitted, and upon them as postulates the analysis that follows is based.

KYRIE

No. 1. *Coro.* SSATB. Flauti traversi i. ii; Oboi d'amore i. ii; Fagotti; Violini i. ii; Viola; figured bass (Continuo).[2] (126 bars.)

The *Adagio* (bar 1) and *Largo ed un poco piano* (bar 5) are in the Dresden parts. In the complete Score *Largo* at bar 5 is the only direction. The *piano* at bar 30 and *forte* at bars 48 and 50 are in the parts. There are no other expression marks. Fl. and Ob. are in unison in the Score and the Fag. is lacking.

No. 2. *Duetto.* SS. Vn. i. ii (unison); figured Continuo. (85 bars.)

The *f* at F in Novello's edition is not in the Score.

No. 3. *Coro.* SS(unis.)ATB. Vn. i col Fl. trav. i. ii e Ob. d'am. i; Vn. ii col Ob. d'am. ii; Viola; Fagotti; figured Continuo. (59 bars.)

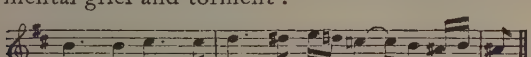
The direction *Alla breve* (bar 1) is supplemented in the complete Score by *Stromenti in unisuono.* In the parts the quartet of instruments is in unison with the voices, except at bars 48–50, where the Fagotti are with the Continuo. There are no expression marks.

The *Kyrie* contains six words. Bach develops them in three movements—270 bars. In No. 1, with hands upstretched to heaven, *Ecclesia christiana* makes confession of sin and begs forgiveness in a fugal

[1] *Style in Musical Art*, p. 77.

[2] The B. G. edition prints the figured Continuo of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* from the Dresden parts. In the Score the Continuo of those movements is unfigured.

subject which, shorn of embellishments, reveals itself in its chromatic structure as typical, in Bach's idiom, of mental grief and torment :



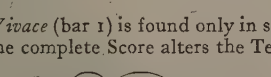
First the Tenors, then the Altos, then the Sopranos, and lastly the Basses raise the threnody, which swells with increasing urgency until it reaches its tremendous climax, eight bars from the end, upon the entry of the vocal Basses. The second clause, 'Christe eleison' (No. 2), set as a Duet for two Sopranos, breathes an atmosphere of serenity, as though the preceding urgency of self-accusation had brought confidence in the divine forgiveness. The third clause, 'Kyrie eleison' (No. 3), resumes the mood of No. 1. But the utterance is no longer passionate, the structure is simpler, and the five voice parts are reduced to four. Throughout, the *Kyrie* paints a picture very vivid in the composer's mind. Its stupendous opening cry is as dramatic as the despairing 'Help, Lord!' of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah', and identical in its significance.

GLORIA

(The borrowed movements are starred)

No. 4. *Coro.* SSATB. Tromba i. ii. iii ; Timpani ; Fl. trav. i. ii ; Ob. i. ii ; Fagotti ; Vn. i. ii ; Va. ; figured Continuo. (176 bars.)

The direction *Vivace* (bar 1) is found only in some of the parts. At bar 104 the complete Score alters the Tenor part thus :



There are no expression marks, Fl., or Fag., in the Score.

No. 5. *Aria.* Sii. Vn. Solo; Vn. i. ii; Va.; figured Continuo. (62 bars.)

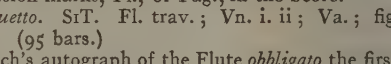
The Violin *obbligato* is marked *Solo* by Bach himself in the Dresden parts. In the complete Score it is marked *Violino Concertante.* The Score marks the voice part *Soprano 2ndo.* Bach's *piano* and *forte* markings are as printed in the Novello edition. But a *piano* should be added at the last quaver of bar 3.

*No. 6. *Coro.* SS(unis.)ATB. Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Ob. i. ii; Vn. i (col Fl. trav. i. ii), Vn. ii; Va.; Fagotti; figured Continuo. (46 bars.)

The direction *Alla breve* in the parts is supplemented by *Stromenti in unisuono* in the complete Score. Excepting a few very minor differences, Vn. i (with Oboe i and Fl. i. ii), Vn. ii, Va., and Fagotti are in unison respectively with SATB. Trombe and Timp. have independent parts. There are no expression marks, Fl., or Fag., in the Score.

No. 7. *Duetto.* SiT. Fl. trav.; Vn. i. ii; Va.; figured Continuo. (95 bars.)

In Bach's autograph of the Flute *obbligato* the first bar reads



This form is not repeated and is not found in the complete Score. The Continuo is marked *pizzicato*, the Viola *Sourdini.* The *p* and *f* marks (parts) are correctly stated in the Novello score.

*No. 8. *Coro.* SiiATB. Fl. trav. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; Vncello; figured Continuo. (50 bars.)

Some of the parts are marked *Lento*, others *Adagio.* The Strings are marked *senza sourdini*, the 'Cello *col' arco.* There are no expression marks in the Score.

No. 9. *Aria.* A. Ob. d'am.; Vn. i. ii; Va.; figured Continuo. (86 bars.)

The direction *Adagio* (bar 74) is in the complete Score and most of the parts. The obviously intended *a tempo* on the sixth quaver of that bar is nowhere indicated. The *p*, *pp*, and *f* marks in Novello's vocal score are Bach's, except the *p* at bar 73. A *pp* should be substituted for *p* at bar 19.

No. 10. *Aria.* B. Corno da caccia; Fag. i. ii; figured Continuo. (127 bars.)

The MS. vocal part is marked *Solo.* The *piano* and *forte* marks (parts) are correctly entered in the Novello score.

No. 11. *Coro.* SSATB. Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Fl. trav. i. ii; Ob. i. ii; Fagotti; Vn. i. ii; Va.; figured Continuo. (128 bars.)

The Oboes are in unison with the Flutes until bar 111. A brilliant accompaniment to the fugue at bar 37 will be found in the Christmas version of the *Gloria* (Cantata 191, B. and H. edition, p. 32). The Fagotto part, marked *unisono*, is not with the Continuo in the middle (fugue) section. There are no Fag. or expression marks in the Score.

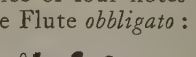
The *Gloria* stands in brilliant apposition to the *Kyrie*, or *Praecatio ecclesiae*, the Church's petition to the Trinity. The *Gloria* expresses its exultant homage to Christ the Priest-King, throned in glory with the Father and the Holy Ghost. The eight movements in which Bach treats it begin and end in a blaze of jubilation, set in the swinging triple measure he delighted in, especially the $\frac{3}{8}$ *tempo*, of which there are three examples in the Mass—the first Chorus of the *Gloria* (No. 4), the 'Pleni sunt coeli' section of the *Sanctus* (No. 20), and the 'Osanna' (No. 21). In the 'Christmas Oratorio' there are four $\frac{3}{8}$ Choruses (Nos. 1, 24, 36, 54), all jubilant in mood, and all of them except one (No. 36), it is worth remarking, in the same key (D major) as the three in the Mass. The three-quaver bar for choral writing is characteristic of Bach. Handel hardly ever employed it; a rare instance of his use of it is the Chorus-Trio 'Disdainful of danger' in 'Judas Maccabaeus'.

The fact, already remarked,[1] that Bach used the 'Gloria' (No. 4) in a Christmas Cantata explains his treatment of it. It is frankly Christmas music, and breathes the freshness, as it expresses the joy, of the *hymnus angelicus*. The mood is prolonged into the Soprano Aria, 'Laudamus te' (No. 5), with the delicious embroidery of the Violin *obbligato*, a charac-

[1] *Supra*, p. 30.

teristic Bach 'Joy' rhythm, one of the purest and freshest imaginable. The Chorus that follows, 'Gratias agimus' (No. 6), brilliantly as the soaring trumpets light it at the close, is built on an austere theme that suggests a modal phrase of ancient use. First of the adapted movements of the Mass,[1] it has the formality of a Latin grace, and transports the listener to the aisles of some Gothic fane.

The following Duet, 'Domine Deus' (No. 7), illustrates Bach's inability to resist an opportunity for pictorial illustration. Since the clause apostrophizes the First and Second Persons of the Godhead, he is at pains to illustrate their essential and doctrinal unity. The medium or *motif* of illustration is the descending sequence of four notes first heard in the opening bar of the Flute *obbligato*:



The voices enter upon it, the words being so phrased as to permit 'Deus' and 'Fili' to be heard together. Simultaneously the illuminating *motif* is heard on the First Violins and Flute (bars 18 and 19), as it were announcing the Unity of the Persons. Later (p. 58, line 4, bar 3), the abrupt descent of the Strings through two sequences (a complete octave) of the *motif* clearly signifies the descent of the Godhead into Man and the resultant Unity of Substance.[2] Yet another illustration of Bach's realism may be observed. Until the last twenty-one bars (beginning at p. 61, line 2, bar 2) the two voices separately address, the one the Father, the

[1] *Supra*, p. 18.

[2] By the same device Bach illustrates 'descendit de coelis' in No. 14.

other the Son. But the Unity of Persons being established, Bach unites the voices in adoration of the God-Man whose dual Personalities they so far had addressed separately.[1]

The liturgical significance of the *Gloria* lies in Nos. 8, 9, and 10 of the Mass, which in turn apostrophize Christ's atoning Sacrifice, his mediatorial office, and his Kingship. The first of these movements, the Chorus 'Qui tollis' (No. 8), the second of the adapted choruses of the Mass,[2] is extraordinarily poignant, 'one of Bach's most concentrated and deeply felt movements', Parry justly calls it.[3] Equally plaintive is the Alto Aria, 'Qui sedes' (No. 9), which pictures the pleading Saviour. The Bass Aria, 'Quoniam tu solus' (No. 10), is not less effective in suggesting the Saviour's kingly office because the typical sport of German Courts is incongruously associated with it by the hunting Horn *obbligato*.

The final Chorus, 'Cum sancto Spiritu' (No. 11), hymns the Saviour enthroned upon

> the sapphire-coloured throne,
> Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
> Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow.

The Trumpets, adding glittering brilliance to the picture, bring the movement to an end in the high ether where morning stars and angels together sing in glory.

[1] These glosses may appear fantastic. But whether they do or do not interpret Bach correctly, they are entirely in accordance with his methods of musical illustration.

[2] *Supra*, p. 20. [3] *J. S. Bach*, p. 314.

CREDO

No. 12. *Coro.* SSATB. Vn. i. ii; Continuo. (45 bars.)
In the complete Score only a few bars of the Continuo are figured by Bach. The rest are figured by C. P. E. Bach. Julius Rietz does not print the figuring in the Bachgesellschaft edition. As it stands, the movement is a fugue in seven parts, with a free Bass. There are no expression marks in the Score.

*No. 13. *Coro.* SS(unis.)ATB. Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Ob. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; Continuo figured chiefly by C. P. E. Bach. (84 bars.)
There are no expression marks in the Score.

No. 14. *Duetto.* SA. Ob. d'am. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; unfigured Continuo. (80 bars.) There are no Oboes in the Score. They are supplied from early copies.
The Score is marked *Andante* at bar 1, and *piano* at the entry of the instruments at bar 10. Strings are *soli* at bars 49, 70, *tutti* at bars 28, 42, 63, 76.

No. 15. *Coro.* SSATB. Vn. i. ii; unfigured Continuo (except bars 2–9). (49 bars.)
There are no expression marks in the Score.

*No. 16. *Coro.* SIIATB. Fl. trav. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; unfigured Continuo (except bar 17). (53 bars.)
The last five bars are marked *piano* in the Score.

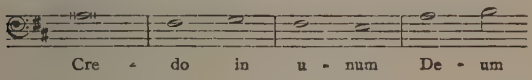
No. 17. *Coro.* SSATB. Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Fl. trav. i. ii; Ob. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; unfigured Continuo. (131 bars.)
The expression marks in the Score do not appear to be Bach's.

No. 18. *Aria.* B. Ob. d'am. i. ii; unfigured Continuo. (144 bars.)
C. P. E. Bach substituted Violins for the Oboi d'amore. The expression marks are correctly entered in the Novello vocal score.

No. 19. *Coro.* SSATB. Unfigured Continuo (bars 1–146); *Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Fl. trav. i. ii; Ob. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; unfigured Continuo (bars 147–251). (251 bars.)
Though Bach's clear intention was that the 'Confiteor' should be accompanied only by the Continuo, C. P. E. Bach put the Oboes and Violins with the Sopranos, Viola with the Altos, Fagotti with the Tenors, and Violoncelli with the Basses. The direction *Adagio* (bar 121) is Bach's, and so is the *Vivace e Allegro* at the beginning of the 'Et expecto'. In the complete Score the latter stands at the second bar, in the parts sometimes at the first. There are no expression marks in the Score.

The *Symbolum Nicaenum*, as Bach's generation called the Nicene Creed, does not suggest itself as an ideal text for musical treatment. Beethoven, like Mozart and Schubert, was satisfied with a conventionally florid setting, careless to explore or illustrate its dogmatic subtleties. Bach, on the other hand, is obviously concerned with them, but without sacrificing his art. The *Credo* is glorious as pure music, and there are no anti-climaxes. After the solidly affirmed 'I believe' of No. 12, Bach looks forward to the 'Et resurrexit' (No. 17) as the goal toward which the music, like the words, must move, and refuses by anticipating to diminish its impressiveness.

The *Credo* includes eight movements, all but two of which are Choruses. Perhaps Bach felt that no foundation less solid could support fundamentals. The first movement, the Chorus 'Credo in unum Deum' (No. 12), is built upon the Intonation associated with the Creed for more than fifteen hundred years and still in general use:



This severe Latin theme[1] is declaimed above what has been aptly called a 'steadfast and confident' procession of pedal crotchets, an inexorably pulsing foundation which persists until the final bar, and symbolizes the unshakeable solidarity of the Church's faith, giving the movement a demeanour, in Sir Hubert Parry's words, 'positively fierce in its intensity'.[2] Nor is it the only device Bach employs

[1] That it was sung at St. Thomas's we know from Vopelius, p. 497.

[2] *J. S. Bach*, p. 316.

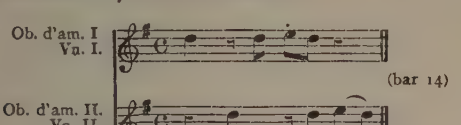
to illustrate the impregnability of the Christian belief. At bar 13 from the end of the movement (p. 97, line 2, bar 4) a remarkable passage begins with the entry of the vocal Basses. While they declaim the Intonation in augmentation, the Second Sopranos and Altos sing it in its normal form, the First Sopranos answer in syncopation, and the First and Second Violins discuss it in imitation. Such *tours de force* were congenial to composers of the polyphonic school, and to Bach more so than all. But there can be little doubt that the deliberate object of this interweaving of the *motif* was to enforce by musical device the unity and solidarity of the Catholic Faith.

The next movement, the 'Patrem omnipotentem' (No. 13), withdraws us from the incensed interior in which the preceding number placed us. It pictures the Father throned in majesty, the full orchestra and the seraphic trumpets painting a scene which, glorious and inspired as it is, but faintly anticipates the splendours the *Sanctus* will later unfold. The movement, in fact, affords an illustration of Bach's unerring sense of balance. For whereas the text must have moved his creative impulse urgently, it is actually clothed in old material, as has been remarked already,[1] somewhat formal, yet impressive.

Bach treats the 'Et in unum Deum' (No. 14) as already he had treated No. 7. Both expound the relations of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity. Both are consequently in Duet form, and in both the dogmatic formulae of the text are illustrated and enforced. As Schweitzer points out,[2] the voices follow each other in canonic imitation, the one proceeding out of the other as the words declare

[1] *Supra*, p. 21.
[2] Vol. ii, p. 319.

the Son to proceed from the Father. Spitta observes[1] that the 'et in unum' phrase is tongued or bowed differently by the Violins and Oboes, detached quavers being answered by slurred notes:



and supposes it, perhaps with exaggeration, another device of Bach's to illustrate the diversity of the fundamental Unity of Persons. As in No. 7, Bach illustrates the passing of the Godhead into Man by descending orchestral passages, the first at bars 21–2 (p. 107, line 3, bar 3), the second at bar 8 from the end. From bar 64 onward (p. 111, line 2, bar 2) Bach's first version of the movement was set to the words 'et incarnatus est de Spiritu sancto ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est', which subsequently he withdrew and set in a separate number (No. 15). The descending orchestral passage, intended to illustrate the words 'incarnatus' and 'homo factus est', remains equally relevant to 'descendit de coelis'.[2] But, as a whole, the movement is formal, and the least attractive in the Mass.

The Chorus 'Et incarnatus' (No. 15) was an afterthought. Bach felt the obligation to treat the Mystery of the Incarnation by itself, and short as the movement is, simple as is its construction, he conveys with extraordinary impressiveness a brooding sense of awe and mystery. The throbbing, pulsing Continuo

[1] Vol. iii, p. 51.
[2] The discarded version is printed in Novello's score, p. 200.

suggests a nebulous cosmos awaiting vivification. Above, the Violins in unison fashion a hovering figure which typifies the life-giving Spirit. Between these outer lines of symbolic meaning the vocal parts enter quietly and separately upon a descending subject to the words 'et incarnatus', as though conducting the life-giving Spirit to the still inchoate substance. At the fifth bar from the end (p. 117, line 2, bar 1) Bach's symbolism interprets the throbbing Continuo, the lightly falling subject on the Violins, and the intermediate vocal medium. For, upon the words 'et homo factus est' the Violins for the first time (bar 5 from the end) divide, their hovering theme sinks to a temporary and inconclusive close, while simultaneously it appears in the Continuo to indicate the unity of Flesh and Spirit; the Sopranos and Altos, by their ascending phrases, seeming to declare the consequent elevation of the Manhood into God.

The next movement, the 'Crucifixus' (No. 16), is one of the supreme utterances of sacred music. That it is so is the more wonderful, since it is an adaptation[1] and in form a Passacaglia, an ancient Spanish dance in triple measure above a recurring ground-bass or *basso ostinato*.[2] Bach used the same form for one of the greatest of his Organ works, and his success in ennobling these popular rhythms is shown by his use of one of them at this supreme moment in the Mass. The *basso ostinato*, a chromatic 'grief' phrase of four bars, is repeated thirteen times with a persistence that adds to the tragic intensity of the picture. Each vocal part enters separately, enunciating the word 'crucifixus' in amazed horror before the uplifted Cross and its drooping burden. The last five bars Bach marks with one of his rare

[1] *Supra*, p. 22. [2] *Supra*, p. 23.

directions, *piano*. The instruments are silent, excepting the Continuo's persistent throbbing. The Sopranos and the vocal Basses take up its theme, and with it lower the dead Christ into the tomb.[1] It is a passage of very searching pathos, lightened by the unexpected and arresting change of key from E minor to its relative G major on the final chord, conveying an impression of sudden release and triumph. As Mr. Sedley Taylor[2] comments: 'The two great sayings, "It is finished", and "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied", seem summed up in these few wonderful progressions.'

Good Friday passes into Easter Day at the 'Et resurrexit' (No. 17), a long chorus built upon the jubilant theme proclaimed by the Sopranos in its opening bars. The movement is in three divisions, separated and concluded by orchestral *ritornelli* which keep apart the three scenes it presents: the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Second Advent. The whole is dazzling and vivacious, especially the jubilant 'et iterum venturus' (p. 129), which is positively exhilarating.

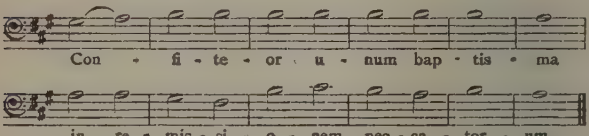
The next movement, the Bass Aria 'Et in Spiritum Sanctum' (No. 18), calls for little comment. Bach clearly desired a contrast to No. 17 and to the greater Chorus that follows. The word 'vivificantem', seizing his imagination, inspired the fresh and tuneful air to which the words are set. If we adopt Spitta's image of the Mass as a territory of mountains and valleys, we may hold this movement a place of rest before ascending new heights.

No. 19 is one of the peaks, and with it Bach's exegesis

[1] *Supra*, p. 25.

[2] *John Sebastian Bach's Mass in B minor in Cambridge, 1908*, p. 18.

of the *Credo* ends. The movement is long and in two sections—the 'Confiteor' (pp. 141–51) leading through the wonderful *Adagio* (p. 151, line 2) to the 'Et expecto' (pp. 153–62). Like the 'Credo' (No. 12), the 'Confiteor' exhales a Roman atmosphere, and it is not an accident that a similar procession of confident pedal crotchets reaffirms the solidarity of the Church's Faith. The old plainsong Intonation of the 'Confiteor'



was not suitable to form the subject of the movement. But (p. 147, line 2, bar 1) it is introduced in a *stretto* between the vocal Basses and Altos, and the vocal Tenors (p. 149, line 1, bar 2) later declaim it in augmentation. Upon its conclusion the five voices pass to the extraordinary passage marked *Adagio* (p. 151), at the words 'et expecto'. These twenty-six bars, though they are transitional, paint one of the great pictures of the Mass. In groping harmonies Bach fashions Ezekiel's vision of the dead world, but in confident hope of the approaching miracle of the Resurrection. Spontaneous as it appears, the section is worked out with infinite care. Notice, for instance, the atmosphere of wonder and anticipation in the two Soprano utterances of the words 'et expecto' (pp. 151–2). Again, the Basses (p. 152, line 2, bars 1–3) soar to the height of their compass on the word 'resurrectionem' and plunge to its depths on the word 'mortuorum'. Notice also that the change in the Continuo at the *Adagio* heightens the sense of expectancy, while its

affinity to the *basso ostinato* of the 'Crucifixus' reveals Bach's care to associate at this point the cardinal facts of the Christian Faith.

With the repetition of the words 'et expecto' (p. 153), *Vivace ed Allegro*,[1] the scene changes. The word 'expecto' is declaimed confidently. The Trumpets and the full orchestra sound a soaring *motif*, the exultant song of the risen dead, and after a triumphant 'Amen' the *Credo* ends upon a final and assertive crotchet.

SANCTUS

No. 20. *Coro.* SSAATB. Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Ob. i. ii. iii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; unfigured Continuo. (168 bars.)
There are no expression marks in the Score.

*No. 21. *Coro.* SSAATTBB. Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Fl. trav. i. ii; Ob. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; unfigured Continuo. (148 bars.)
Only the expression marks, *piano*, *forte*, between bars 104–15 in Novello's edition (p. 187) are in the Score. A copy of the Score in the possession of the Cäcilienverein at Frankfurt-am-Main delays the entry of the Continuo till bar 2, and of the Flutes till bar 3, Oboes till bar 4, Violins till bar 5, Violas and Trumpets till bar 6, interposing four whole bars between the first and second choral passages. There is no authority for this reading.

No. 22. *Aria.* T. Vn. Solo; unfigured Continuo. (57 bars.)
Neither in the complete Score nor elsewhere is the *obbligato* assigned to the Violin by name. There are no expression marks.

After the ecstatic adoration of the *Gloria* and *Credo*, it would seem impossible that Bach should hold any colours in reserve on his palette. And yet, for glory of utterance, the *Sanctus* (No. 20) stands by itself. A detail in Isaiah's vision perhaps prescribed the form of the movement. Bach read of the seraphim that 'one cried unto another'.[2] Therefore a consider-

[1] *Supra*, p. 25.

[2] The significance of Bach's six-part vocal harmony is discussed *supra*, pp. 17, 31.

able part of the movement represents the antiphony of seraphic hosts, the two Sopranos and First Altos voicing one, and the Second Altos, Tenors, and Basses, the second angelic choir. The anthem of adoration rests upon a Bass as solid as the 'Credo's', a mighty 'step' *motif* that strides in octaves and arches the heavens, most powerful and yet most tranquil and assured:

The movement is of overwhelming sublimity, and is followed (p. 170) by the second section of the Angelic Hymn, the 'pleni sunt coeli', the second of the $\frac{3}{8}$ choruses in the Mass, instinct with the pure-hearted gaiety Bach never fails to instil into them.

The 'Osanna' (No. 21) is the only one of the adapted choruses written originally to secular words.[1] A *pièce d'occasion*, the movement has a splendid brilliancy which justifies Bach's adaptation of it.

After No. 22, itself perhaps an adaptation, the only Tenor Aria in the Mass, the 'Benedictus' concludes with a repetition of the 'Osanna'.

AGNUS DEI

*No. 23. *Aria.* A. Vn. i. ii (unis.); unfigured Continuo. (49 bars.) Bach's expression marks are correctly entered in the Novello vocal score.

*No. 24. *Coro.* SSAATTBB as SATB. Tr. i. ii. iii; Timp.; Fl. trav. i. ii col. Ob. i. ii; Vn. i. ii; Va.; unfigured Continuo. (46 bars.)

With occasional divergences Vn. i. ii, Va., and Cont. are with SATB respectively. The wood-wind doubles Vn. i. ii, with minor differences. There are no expression marks in the Score.

[1] *Supra*, p. 26.

The last division of the Mass consists of two numbers. Bach makes no effort to create a climax. After the *Sanctus* and 'Osanna' the liturgy subsides to a quiet *Nunc dimittis*. The first movement of the *Agnus Dei*, the Alto Aria 'Agnus Dei' (No. 23), is borrowed as to three-fourths of its subject.[1] But the words fit the music so ideally that it is difficult to believe it not to have been written for them. Its mood differs widely from Beethoven's setting of the words. Bach interprets them as the confident utterance of the sinner assured of pardon. Beethoven, as Schweitzer remarks,[2] treats them as 'the cry of the pained and terrified soul for salvation, almost dreadful in its intensity', developing them to a conclusion significantly marked *timidamente*, in which the cry for mercy is worked up to a final shriek of the Soprano on a high A flat.

The same contrast of treatment is observable in the final movement of the Mass, the Chorus 'Dona nobis pacem' (No. 24). Beethoven uses the words to support a Symphonic climax. Bach does not even find fresh music for the words, but repeats the 'Gratias agimus' (No. 6).[3] It is useless to speculate on the reason. But the result is evident. A prayer for peace is converted into an act of fervent and restrained thanksgiving, while a broad, catholic atmosphere is preserved to the end by the reappearance of the modal phrase on which the Trumpets insist brilliantly upon their every entry.

[1] *Supra*, p. 27. [2] Vol. ii, p. 323.

[3] Bach's changes in the orchestral score, already referred to (*supra*, p. 20), are also significant of his purpose here.

'THE MUSICAL PILGRIM'

General Editor *Dr. Arthur Somervell*

The '48'

Bach's Wohltemperirtes Clavier

BY

J. A. FULLER-MAITLAND

BOOK I

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
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INTRODUCTION

Among the supreme achievements of the art of music there is none that has a more singular origin than *Das Wohltemperirte Clavier*, that great collection of preludes and fugues in all the keys, major and minor, which Bach disposed in two books, completed in 1722 and 1744 respectively. For by its name the collection professed to be merely an object-lesson or practical demonstration in support of a new system of tuning the domestic harpsichord or clavichord of the day. Some of the preludes had already been used as part of the instruction-book called *Clavierbüchlein* meant for the technical training of his sons, and we are not to suppose that Bach was conscious of any specially lofty ideal in writing the pieces. The high emotion, the deep pathos, the romantic vision, and even the learning which we now admire in them, probably got into them by a kind of divine accident; though we may well imagine that Bach would consciously give of his best to support that system of tuning which the world has now accepted for all keyed instruments.

The adjective 'well-tempered' refers to a controversy that was not finally settled for some years after the appearance of the '48' and its circulation among the admirers of the master in various manuscript copies. There is a curious problem in the nature of music, with which the Greeks were well acquainted, that if a series of fifths (from C to G, G to D, and so on) is tuned exactly true, we eventually arrive back at a note which ought to be in exact unison with the original C from which we started; but there is a gap in the series, a small interval known as a 'comma',

which must for ever forbid the completion of that circle of fifths. The human voice, and the bowed instruments which can modify their pitch as they please, can make music in tune in all keys; but the fixed pitch of the keyed instruments made this impossible as long as any of the keys was perfectly tuned. It had been the practice of the older makers and players of keyed instruments to tune a few keys perfectly and to let the error of the 'comma' be relegated to the keys which were seldom needed. Just Intonation and the Meantone system were upheld by many of the older musicians, who were ready to sacrifice the less obvious keys for the sake of the undoubtedly great beauty of the keys which were in tune. We do not know who in Bach's time was the champion of the system of Equal Temperament, which may be described as a way of spreading the error equally among all the keys; but the title of this work proves that he threw himself into the discussion on the side of the innovators. Any one who wished to play the whole book through must needs have his 'Clavier' tuned in the new way. The organ was for the most part left alone, or provided with an arrangement by which the black notes were divided so as to give a different pitch for A flat and G sharp, for example. But in the other keyed instruments there was nothing for it but to lose the exquisite purity of the chords in the keys with few sharps or flats, for the sake of widening the resources of the art by the use of all twelve keys.

The 'Clavier' of the title is a word of tiresome ambiguity, for it is applied equally to the virginal, spinet, harpsichord, clavichord, and pianoforte, and even to the manuals of the organ. But internal evidence is very strong that the great majority of

these preludes and fugues were intended for the clavichord. The harpsichord had no power whatever of making one part emphatic, or of laying stress upon one of the voices of a fugue while other voices were being played by the same hand.

Fugues that were written for the harpsichord are apt to give evidence of their purpose by such devices as getting the subordinate parts into one hand, and leaving the other hand free to bring out the prominent part on another manual. But the way in which the parts in the '48' are interwoven and divided between the two hands proves clearly that an instrument must have been used which could answer to different finger-pressures; and such an instrument is the clavichord, with its power of almost infinite gradation within its narrow limits of tone. The full beauty of many of these preludes and fugues can only be realized when they are played on the clavichord, or when a clavichord player, accustomed to the delicate gradations of his own instrument, transfers them to a peculiarly sensitive pianoforte.

The full title of the first book is as follows (a facsimile is given in Parry's *J. S. Bach*, p. 146, and in Tovey's edition):

Das wohltemperirte Clavier oder Praeludia und Fugen durch alle Tone und Semitonia, sowohl tertiam majorem oder Ut Re Mi anlangend, als auch tertiam minorem oder Re Mi Fa betreffend. Zum Nutzen und Gebrauch der Lehrbegierigen Musikalischen Jugend als auch derer in diesem Studio schon habil seyenden besonderen Zeitvertreib aufgesetzet und verfertiget von Johann Sebastian Bach, p. t. hochfürstl. Anhalt-Cöthenischen Capellmeistern und Directore derer Kammer-Musiquen. Anno 1722.

(The well-tuned Keyboard, or, Preludes and Fugues in all the tones and semitones, alike with the major third, or Ut, Re, Mi, and with the minor third, or Re, Mi, Fa. For the use of young musicians who are eager to learn, and also as a pastime for those who are already skilled in this study, set out and

made by Johann Sebastian Bach, Capellmeister to the Grand Duke of Anhalt-Cöthen, and director of his chamber-music. Anno 1722.)

It is perhaps worth noticing that in this title, with its queer jumble of languages, there is no claim made for the book on the ground of its being a practical illustration of fugal composition. It was not an 'Art of Fugue', and there have been sticklers for the letter of the laws of fugue who have pronounced sentence against more than one of the '48' as transgressing the rules. All one can say is 'so much the worse for the rules'.

Many treatises on Fugue, and a famous line in *The Mikado*, have helped to spread the idea that fugues are necessarily dry and scholastic things; but if practical refutation were wanted, here it is, for in the '48', whether they are model fugues or not, we have creations of superlative beauty and expressiveness. At the same time, no one will enjoy the fugues less for knowing at least the outline of the plan on which they are constructed; for the fugue is of all the forms of music the most elaborate, and without any knowledge of what is meant by the technical terms we are obliged to use, the listener, even if he be one of nature's musicians, will receive little impression beyond a sense of cumulative effect or a general feeling of a joyful or melancholy mood, as the case may be. Therefore it may be excusable to refer shortly to the usual names for the different parts of the form, since they will have to be used even in the most cursory analysis.

It is merely a gibe that 'Fugue is a composition in which the parts fly from one another, and the hearer from them all'; but the idea of flight and pursuit is undoubtedly present in the typical fugue,

and an amusingly accurate analysis of the form is in Browning's 'Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha'.

Subject. The first phrase, almost always given out by itself, and very soon 'imitated' by the

Answer. This is the starting-point of the second 'voice' or part, and as a rule is a repetition of the Subject a fourth or fifth above or below it. Here we must face two terms which are not at all helpful, viz.

Real and *Tonal.* For practical purposes, the octave is considered to be divided into two at the Dominant, or fifth above the key-note; but it is obvious that the two divisions are not equal, since a fifth is a larger interval than a fourth. The plan of a fugue requires that the subject should lead into the dominant key, and that the Answer should lead back to the tonic harmony, so that another voice may enter with the Subject again. In some cases the repetition of the Subject by the Answer can be exact; in such cases the Answer is called a 'Real' one, and the first of these fugues is an example. In other cases the intervals have to be adapted in the Answer in order to come back to the tonic harmony for the new entry of the Subject. A very clear instance is in the second of the '48', where between the third and fourth notes of the Answer there is the interval of a fifth, while the Subject in the same place had a fourth. (Book I has nine 'real' to fifteen 'tonal' fugues; and Book II an equal number of each.)

Counter-Subject. While the 'Answer' is entering, the part which first announced the Subject must do something else, and the notes with which it accompanies the newly-entering part are called the Counter-Subject. Many fugues have more than one counter-subject; but whether single or manifold, this feature is an integral part of the structure, and in some cases

Bach seems to be more interested in the counter-subject than in the subject itself.

Exposition. The entry of all the parts for which the fugue is laid out, alternately with the Subject and the Answer, together with the Counter-Subject in each in turn, completes what is called the 'Exposition' of the fugue; and often there follows almost immediately the 'Counter-exposition', a restatement of the entries, in a different order from the original.

Episode. This name is given to the short transitional passages which are often used to lead from one division of the fugue to another; they are freely invented, but in the greatest examples are closely connected in style with the rest of the material.

Stretto. One of the most interesting points in the typical fugue is when the Answer, which at first entered at a certain distance after the entry of the Subject, now enters again at a shorter distance. The various 'stretti' in the first fugue are easy to grasp, and very beautiful. It was the custom to arrange successive 'stretti' so that the distance between the entries was lessened every time; sometimes the climax of these entries was called a 'stretto maestrale'; a wonderful stretto of this kind occurs at the end of the fifth fugue of Book II.

Inversion. The Subject or Answer is sometimes brought in upside down, every rising interval of the original being imitated by a falling interval in the inversion.

Augmentation. The Subject is sometimes presented in notes of double the original length, and sometimes in

Diminution, or in notes of half the original length. The last three devices are generally introduced simultaneously with the repetition of the Subject or Answer in its original form.

Pedal Point. Somewhere near the end of the fugue there is very often a passage built on a held note in the bass part, either the key-note (tonic pedal) or the dominant; upon this the other parts run their course, with all kinds of references to subject, counter-subject, and episodes. There are plenty of fine instances in the '48', but perhaps the most triumphant use of the device is the magnificent chorus 'But the righteous souls' in the *Requiem* of Brahms, the whole number being built on a tonic pedal.

So much for the dry bones of the structure; the student who wishes to go on with the anatomy of Fugue may be recommended to read the treatises of Ebenezer Prout on 'Fugue' and 'Fugal Analysis', the 'Analysis of the Wohltemperirtes Clavier' by Riemann, or Dr. Iliffe's scholarly book on the same subject. The detailed commentary by Professor Donald Tovey in the edition published by the Associated Board of the R.A.M. and the R.C.M. is of very great value. Such study is to be heartily encouraged, provided only that the student's attention is not so taken up with the technical ingenuity of the work as to disregard its poetical beauty. It is well to play these masterpieces as pure music, without reference to their erudition on the one hand or to their technical value as manual exercises on the other. There is no doubt that no book of technical exercises has half the value of the '48' for increasing independence of finger, the power of bringing out one part above the rest, and for training brain and fingers simultaneously.

Whether we approach this great work from the point of view of pianoforte technique, of fugal analysis, or of musical beauty, it will prove to have revelations for us all. He who has ground at the various manual

difficulties which beset his path, and he who has studied the fugues as illustrations of obedience to or transgressions of the rules of the form, will suddenly become aware of the exquisite musical eloquence, the enormous range of emotion, and the depth of feeling which are the crown and glory of this, as of all Bach's work; and in like manner he who has loved them for their mere musical beauty and perhaps has lived with them as friends of every day, will find a new fascination in following closely the plans upon which they are constructed; to him the tiresome nomenclature will be only a very slight hindrance to his enjoyment of the process of analysis, and he need not fear that the minute investigation will disturb the beauty of the ideals. The microscope does not lessen the botanical student's love of the flowers he dissects.

Comparing these fugues with the others by the same master for keyboard (apart from those for organ), we are struck by the small number of isolated fugues that are worthy to be put beside the '48'. The great fugue of the 'Chromatic Fantasia', and the brilliant work in A minor with the arpeggio prelude, are almost the only two that can claim an equality with the '48'; and in making up the collection we can almost see Bach giving of his very best in support of the new system of tuning, and putting, as we say, his best foot foremost in order to get the new tuning accepted generally.

Although it had to wait more than half a century before it was printed, the collection must have made a sensation amongst the pupils of the master; for there are manuscript copies of the whole work in abundance, and these have very great authority, since there are only two undoubted autographs of the first part (both in Berlin), and neither of these is quite

complete. For many years the authorities for the complete second book were only the transcripts by Bach's pupils and contemporaries, for the most important autograph was in England, in the possession of Clementi, at whose sale it was bought by a Mr. Emett; his daughter left it to Miss Eliza Wesley, who bequeathed it to the British Museum in 1896. Its importance in points of detailed readings cannot be exaggerated; but so far its influence on practical editions seems to have been very small.

The first published editions were by Nägeli of Zurich in 1800, and by Simrock about the same time; in the latter the two books are in reverse order. The original Peters edition came only a year afterwards, and it must have been one of these three that came into the hands of Samuel Wesley, whose enthusiastic letters to his friend Jacob about the work may still be read with profit and amusement. Of more modern editions there is of course no end; one of the best-known is that of Czerny, valuable for its practical hints on fingering, &c., but containing numbers of false readings. Samuel Wesley and C. Horn brought out their edition in 1810–13, and this, with Czerny's, was the standard edition until Kroll edited it for the Bach-Gesellschaft. Bischoff prepared a carefully annotated edition as vols. 5 and 6 of his complete edition of Bach's clavier works. There have recently appeared two important English editions: one prepared by Professor Tovey and fingered by Harold Samuel (published by the Associated Board of the R.A.M. and the R.C.M.); and the other a beautifully printed and admirably arranged volume, published by Novello & Co., and carefully edited by Harold Brooke.

BOOK I

i. 1. *In C major* (*4-part fugue*)

THERE are shrines that can only be approached after the worshipper has performed some lustral rite, and the need for such purification meets us at the threshold of the great temple we are now to enter. For in order to understand the real meaning of the Preludes and Fugues, and to get from them the spiritual blessings they can convey, we must purify ourselves from all taint of remembrance of a certain dreadful piece of sentimentality which was for many years fashionable even among people who ought to have known better, Gounod's 'Meditation' or 'Ave Maria', a sugary tune placed on the top of the first Prelude. The whole point of the Prelude in C is its negation of a defined melody; it is in one aspect a transformation of the arpeggio prelude in common use, which generally means nothing whatever, into a creation of perfect loveliness, the ethereal beauty of which is due in great measure to the subtle suggestions of its harmonies. Like many other flawless works of art, if seems as though it had sprung forth spontaneously, as though it could not ever have gone through any process of development; but there remain for our instruction evidences of the process by which it attained its perfection. No doubt the dull version handed down by Forkel (see B.-G., xiv. 205) must represent its first state, and in the 'Clavierbüchlein' it is found more highly developed. The comparison of the versions is made by Bischoff, p. 8.

There is a very curious point between bars 22 and 23, where in a good many editions there is found a bar built on G as a bass in order to pass more smoothly from the F sharp of bar 22 to the A flat of bar 23. The whole evidence of the autographs is against the addition, which only occurs in a MS. by one Schwenke. The abrupt transition on which all the best MS. authorities agree is not unlike Bach, and most people in the present day will feel that they prefer the prelude without Schwenke's extra bar, which, as we might expect, is required for Gounod's *eau sucrée*.

The Fugue, with its quiet, almost stealthy, beginning, has not escaped the censures of the wiseacres; for it has no 'episode' properly so called, and no counter-exposition. It is richer in 'strettos' than almost any other of the '48', and very wonderful they are; in most of them (there are six in all) the one voice follows the other at a distance of two quavers, and once the imitation is after the fourth quaver. Here, too, we find traces of alterations by the master himself, for it seems that the theme had originally a quaver and two even semiquavers for the third group of the first bar, and in parallel places; the dotted quaver and the two demisemiquavers obviously make for greater point and effect.

i. 2. *In C minor* (*3-part fugue*)

The second prelude, in C minor, has a striking point of similarity with the first; for each of the successive figures is repeated twice in each bar, giving a great stateliness to the march of the harmonies with their wonderful modulations. To some superficial critics it has seemed 'like an exercise', and in its earliest shape, in the 'Clavierbüchlein' of W. F.

Bach—which leaves out the exciting Presto and Adagio portion—there is some excuse, for it is a fine study in technique. But, as in many of Chopin's *Études*, the course of the harmony gives it great individuality, even without the additional bars that turned it into a really dramatic piece of music. Schwenke, Kroll, and Czerny give some curious variants here and there, but the text accepted (in bar 18) by Bischoff and Tovey is indisputably the best.

Nor is there any doubt about the text of the fugue, which shows Bach in a mood of freakish gaiety, as though he were anxious to controvert the silly idea that the minor mode must always be melancholy in character. From the ninth bar onwards, the rhythmic opening of the theme is continually prominent, often accompanying the regular entries of subject or answer, so that for a second or two we are not certain in which part the real entry is being made.

i. 3. *In C sharp major* (*3-part fugue*)

The C sharp major prelude and fugue can hardly fail to convey a kind of pastoral impression, like the happy peace of summer fields, intensified, not broken, by the thousand little sounds that tell of tiny activities everywhere. The two might stand as a commentary on Blake's 'Shepherd', and the fugue for an illustration of the line 'His tongue shall be fillèd with praise'. Though the lovely prelude seems to be entirely spontaneous, yet it, like its predecessors, has undergone alterations, for in bars 8 and 16, the group which now consists of a quaver followed by four semiquavers was originally one of three even quavers. Forkel hands down a version in which, after bar 63,

the prelude has only six more measures. There is a very curious point in musical psychology in connexion with this prelude; for in one edition it is given in the key of D flat, which of course is far easier to read than that of C sharp major. To the hearer without the music before him, there could be no conceivable difference between the two versions, since the notes would be exactly the same in both; but a great many players will share the common feeling that the key with seven sharps has a very brilliant, glittering effect, while the five flats suggest a mood of languor and romantic sentiment; in the minds of such players the two are as strongly contrasted as sunlight and moonlight; and perhaps some of the difference they feel may be actually though unconsciously conveyed to the listener.

The variants in the fugue are mainly concerned with the third group of semiquavers in bar 3, where in most of the manuscripts there is an F double-sharp, though several of the authorities read it as F sharp. It is impossible to be quite sure which Bach meant, but the editions of Bischoff, Tovey, and Brooke agree in preferring the double-sharp. The subject itself is not transformed in any way, but the two counter-subjects are combined, inverted, and otherwise modified.

i. 4. *In C sharp minor* (*5-part fugue*)

With this Prelude and Fugue Riemann says, 'We now enter into the Holy of Holies; throughout the sum-total of musical literature there are but few pieces so full of dignity and of inspiration as these two.' In the Prelude we meet for the first time with

a more highly organized melodic structure than that of the preceding preludes, each of which is built on a recurring figure. Here there are two very beautiful themes, each the complement of the other; the first is closely imitated, as if the whole prelude were to be in canonic form, but at the fifth bar a rising theme enters, and the two proceed side by side, worked with a skill so amazing that our sense of its ingenuity is lost in awe at its divine pathos. The signs for various ornaments, given by Kroll and other editors (by Bischoff and Tovey in brackets), seem to have been added to the original autograph, not impossibly by Bach himself, and quite probably due to his own or some pupil's desire to transfer the piece from the clavichord to the harpsichord. They emphasize the romantic softness of the prelude, and are so characteristic that the unadorned version given by Mr. Brooke will appeal to the few rather than to the many. This editor, curiously, retains only one of the many arpeggio signs of other editions, that in bar 3, which hardly seems to justify its presence if the others are left out. In particular, there is one in the second half of bar 29, where the chord with a transverse stroke through it indicates that the intermediate note, C sharp, must be lightly touched as the written notes are held down. Like the other ornaments, it is fully written out in Tovey's edition, but, unlike them, is not enclosed in brackets.

The five-part fugue is of matchless grandeur, and in spite of the extreme elaboration of its design, is one of those that most readily make an impression upon the less advanced student. The theorists call it a fugue with three counter-subjects, rather than a triple fugue; but the name does not matter very

much as long as we understand the outline of its structure. The majestic theme of four notes is associated with an unobtrusive counter-subject through the exposition and the counter-exposition, that is until bar 36, when the flowing quavers of the second counter-subject attract our attention; this has its regular entries, and is joined with the main theme in most effective contrast. The first counter-subject, having played its part, is not heard again through the fugue; at bar 49 yet another counter-subject of great importance comes in again with successive entries, and from this point the three (the theme and the second and third counter-subjects) are worked together and woven in and out with gorgeous intricacy. Even this is not enough, for at bar 92 the third counter-subject starts a stretto of its own, and the main theme accompanies it with a stretto equally independent. At this point the flowing second subject withdraws in its turn, and the rhythm of the first counter-subject is allowed to appear at the very end, on the double pedal of the last four bars, where the main theme and the third counter-subject are for a moment associated with it between the stationary parts of the soprano and bass. Of course, it is a hopeless task to give any description in words which will even suggest the beauty of such a fugue as this; it is perhaps more useful to give some hints as to the best way of interpreting its spirit. The study of the work on the clavichord tells one more about it than volumes of analysis; for the three most important factors can be successfully differentiated on that instrument by the use of various touches. The theme itself must be as heavy as the limitations of the clavichord will allow; the flowing quavers of the second counter-subject can be done with a light but *legatissimo* touch, and the emphatic little taps

of the third can be brought out with a delicate staccato followed by well-slurred quavers. To keep these three distinct is not impossible even on the piano, and such a phrasing as I have suggested is evidently recommended in the Brooke edition.

i. 5. *In D major* (*4-part fugue*)

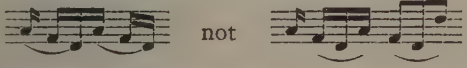
The D major Prelude is another of those that are built on a recurring figure, which figure serves an educational purpose; as in other similar cases, the books, such as Friedemann's 'Clavierbüchlein' and Forkel's transcript, which seem to have served for instruction, shorten the end of the prelude, cutting out the cadenza-like passage which affords so admirable a relief from the recurrent motion of the figure. As a study in *leggiero* playing, and especially in the pretty kind of mezzo-staccato that results from there being a space between the regular part of the figure and the notes above and below—in this case the first of each group of four semiquavers—it is particularly valuable, and Czerny must have taken hints from this prelude for some of his studies. But the prelude is much more than this, for after running a gracious course for 26 bars, there appears a pedal A, and the character becomes more dramatic. Perhaps the groups of eight demisemiquavers are intentionally introduced as a foretaste of the strange rhythm of the Fugue.

The group of eight rapid notes with which the fugue begins is to be understood as a highly ornamented version of a single D, on the unaccented second beat of the bar. The little group of four semiquavers at the end of bar 3 is responsible for the episodical matter of the fugue and is generally asso-

ciated with the dotted rhythm that appears in the subject. The little strettos are not very noticeable, and the whole fugue suggests an amusingly pompous overture in the French manner.

i. 6. *In D minor* (*3-part fugue*)

Here is yet another of the preludes on a recurrent figure, and as usual the version in the manuscripts used for instruction is shorter than the accepted version in the '48'. The emotional value of the prelude is very great (Bischoff goes so far as to mark it 'appassionato'), if proper attention is given to the true phrasing of the triplet figure. It is well indicated in the Novello edition (Brooke); but it is desirable to bear in mind throughout, or at all events until the last three bars, that the three semiquavers of each group are to be thought of thus:



The fugue subject is one of those which yields itself easily to various devices, and the phrasing of the Bischoff edition, which follows the autographs, brings out its character. Of special importance is the staccato mark on the second crotchet of bar 2, and at parallel places throughout. At bar 12 the alto part has a characteristic little anticipation of the inverted form of the subject which is regularly brought in at bar 14, and at bar 27 there is a stretto beginning with the inversion in the top part, followed by the direct theme in the middle and the inverted in the bass. The ending, for which the three fugal parts are increased to six, has the direct and inverted subject against one another, both moving in thirds.

i. 7. *In E flat major* (*3-part fugue*)

The wonderful composition which is styled 'Prelude' is really a very elaborate fugue on two subjects, a work of far greater musical import than the fugue which follows it under that title. Each of the two subjects has in the introductory bars its own free exposition, and the first, a theme of flowing semiquavers, culminates in a passage of rushing demisemiquavers, leading to the very beautiful delivery of the second theme. This, in like manner, is treated in the manner of a fugue, and at bar 25 the two subjects are combined; at bar 26 the regular answer to the first subject is anticipated by one of those false starts in which we can almost hear Bach laughing at us for being taken in. Three strettos appear before long; the first and second at a distance of two crotchets, and the third at a distance of four. After that point, from bar 48 onwards, the two subjects are combined and treated in new ways, and both appear at the very end in a most beautiful way.

After this profoundly impressive piece, the Fugue proper must come rather as an anticlimax, for it is in a far lighter mood and is less interesting to the student. The two groups of semiquavers in the second bar of the theme (immediately after the shake) provide the material for some interesting episodical work beginning in bar 7, where the figure is augmented in one part against its original form in another. The importance of the quaver rest in bar 1 is very great, and if it is ignored by the player, the fugue will lack the gaiety which is its chief characteristic.

i. 8. *In E flat minor, or D sharp minor* (*3-part fugue*)

The depths of human sorrow have surely never been more faithfully reproduced than they are in this sublime prelude, where two voices answer one another in poignant utterance; its style and feeling make one think of the Passion Music settings, in either of which it might find an appropriate place. I am reluctant to hunt for pictorial suggestion in Bach's music, but the treatment in early sculpture and painting of the two mourners at the foot of the Cross gives, to my mind, the clue to the proper interpretation of this prelude; for the grief it utters is no ordinary grief but a mystical passion, fulfilling the words 'a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed'.

The utmost care must be taken in bringing this prelude to actual performance, so that the chords, usually in arpeggio, should be kept subordinate to the 'voice' parts. I take it that the melody begins, not on the first note of bar 1, but with the quaver later in the bar, and that the B at the beginning is only the top note of the accompanying chord. In bar 4, again, I think that the leap of a tenth to the G flat is possibly not part of the melody, but that the G flat represents one of the accompaniment chords, though it is a single note. This suggestion is borne out by the fact that in Forkel's version this note is represented by a whole chord, identical with those that succeed it. In the same bar, and again in bar 6, the descent of the lower 'voice' may be regarded as merging itself into the accompaniment, since the first notes of bars 5 and 7 in the left hand are given by Forkel as chords.

Forkel's version has not much authority, but it often seems to represent some thought in Bach's mind which was afterwards altered for the better. I am not recommending that a chord should be substituted for the single note in these two passages, but rather that the player should think of the vocal phrase as joining on with the accompaniment. Why the editor of the Novello edition should wait until the twelfth bar before putting in his strange Italian direction, 'il [*sic*] melodia sempre ben sostenuto', it is difficult to guess.

It is very difficult to put into words any impression of the magnificent fugue in E flat minor which shall convey an idea to the reader of the union which it displays of deeply expressive musical utterance with an amount of intricacy and technical resource in which it has few if any rivals among the '48'. It is easy, of course, to dwell on the dry bones of the structure; but in the act of enumerating the strettos or the use of augmentation and the like, the horrible vocabulary of the form must needs obscure for some little time the spiritual beauty and majesty of the work as a whole. The fugue appears in the autographs in D sharp minor, and many of the editions keep it in that key; Riemann is followed by the Novello edition in translating it into E flat minor, and it is probably easier for most people to read in six flats than in six sharps. I should recommend the student to keep both versions before him, using one for the detailed analysis which he will be well-advised to undertake, and the other for delight. If the anatomy of the fugue must be pointed out, I would draw attention to the many strettos, beginning at bar 19, and again at bar 24 and 27; at bar 30 the theme enters in inversion, and an even course is

pursued until bar 44, when there is a regular stretto of the inverted theme, soon (bar 47) followed by a less strict stretto, still of the inverted theme, between the alto and soprano parts, the latter giving a foretaste of what is to come by a kind of free augmentation; at bar 52 there is a very close stretto of the direct theme, and at bar 54 another stricter treatment of the direct theme, after which things quiet down for a little, but only to give us some relief before the marvels that are yet to be shown. At bar 62 we have the theme in augmentation (minims for crotchets, &c.) in the bass, above which the other parts have the theme in direct and inverted motion. The successive delivery of the augmented theme by the alto and soprano, with the interwoven strettos of the other voices, carry us to within a few bars of the close.

To some minds, the contemplation of such triumphant use of technical intricacy is in itself a delight, and for these no labour of analysis can be irksome; others there are who may be able to grasp only very few of its complications but who can dimly discern its greatness as a musical conception; it is only the superficial listener who will set the poetical and the technical factors in opposition, or who will fail to see how indissoluble is the tie that binds them together.

i. 9. *In E major* (*3-part fugue*)

The lovely prelude is unmistakably pastoral in style, and the frequent occurrences of a stationary bass suggest some delicious musette played by a Watteau shepherd. The mood of gaiety which this arouses is carried on in the fugue, one of the simplest of the whole set, as well it might be after the profundity of its predecessor. Care must be taken to give full value

to the semiquaver rest in the subject, without letting it be felt that the emphatic first two notes are unconnected with the flowing passage that follows them. In one of the manuscripts of the French Suites, this prelude is used for the sixth of the set.

i. 10. *In E minor* (*2-part fugue*)

The Prelude in E minor is another of those that betray an educational origin, and we are not surprised to find that, like the others of the same kind, it exists in the versions of Friedemann, Bach, and Forkel in a shorter form, the second part, marked Presto, being omitted. But for those who need not regard it as a technical exercise, it is of very special value, since it embodies the ideal of rubato playing as conceived by Chopin, when he directed the left-hand part to be played in strict time, with the right-hand part freely wandering above it. The rhythmic pairs of quavers between the melody and the figures of the left-hand part are also of great value, and the more accurately these are kept going, the freer may be the phrasing of the beautiful sustained tune which, on the violin, would be given with great liberty as to time. When the Presto comes, rubato must be forgotten, as if the mechanical figuration had won the day; but it is at this point that the main excitement of the prelude begins.

The fugue has several unusual features: first of all, it is only in two parts; second, it is, as Prout says, 'the only example in all Bach's works of a real answer to a subject that closes in the key of the dominant'; and third, it contains two passages where the two parts are in unison for a whole bar. The chief interest of the fugue is in its episodes.

i. 11. *In F major* (3-*part fugue*)

Here is another pair of pieces that sound exquisitely simple, though it would be a very exceptional student of the art of fugue who could produce so fair a specimen as the Fugue in F major. The lyric grace of the prelude is echoed in the fugue, which contains few of the special devices, except some interesting strettos in bars 25 and 36; at bar 35 there is a delightful little false entry of the theme which leads to a pedal note held for five bars; there is another at bar 43, leading to a minor cadence.

i. 12. *In F minor* (4-*part fugue*)

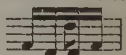
The Prelude in F minor, which exhales a tender melancholy, may have been used as a study for cantabile playing, since a shorter version exists, though it is only Forkel who hands it down. The steady march of the crotchets with the wreath of semiquavers adorning each gives the piece a very distinctive beauty.

The serious opening notes of the fugue must be borne in mind throughout, for they are very apt to escape attention owing to the prominence given to the counter-subject, which provides the material for the episodes. It is curious that the orthodox 'tonal' alteration in the answer which is so strongly marked at the beginning, is not repeated at any of the later entries.

i. 13. *In F sharp major* (3-*part fugue*)

The prelude and fugue in F sharp are closely connected with one another in style, if not in actual thematic formation, though even here some might be tempted to see a family likeness between the

semiquaver triplets of the former and an important semiquaver figure in the latter. Both pieces have exquisite grace and give the idea of amiability more distinctly than almost any other of the '48'. In the prelude one of the autographs, as usual, introduces a number of typical harpsichord 'graces' which are out of place on the clavichord; and since the latter instrument is the direct ancestor of the pianoforte, modern interpreters are amply justified in adopting the unornamented version. Still, if bars 7, 12, 13, and 19 contain shakes on the dotted crotchet (as in Novello's edition), one does not see why the shake is left out in bar 1. It has been added in brackets by Professor Tovey. The ties from the end of one triplet to the first of the next are a characteristic feature, and add greatly to the suavity of the prelude.

The lovely subject of the fugue and its orthodox counter-subject are delightful enough; but at bar 7 there enters, by way of episode, an enchanting little figure (the lightness of which must be brought out either by a staccato touch, or by some other device of phrasing) that may almost be said to monopolize attention up to the end of the fugue. In bar 20 the shape of this charming figure is altered in the Novello edition for no apparent reason. The last group in the right hand should be  as it stands in Bischoff, Tovey, and the B.-G. editions.

i. 14. *In F sharp minor* (*4-part fugue*)

The plaintive falling figure of the prelude prepares us well for the grave beauty of the fugue; the separate quavers, which require a kind of semi-staccato touch,

and must be well emphasized, have been compared to dropping tears, but we need not press this; more important is it to notice that in bar 15 and following the figure is reversed and goes up instead of down, as if giving a hope of ultimate happiness.

The subject of the fugue enters in a curiously stealthy way, with a rhythm that is not easy to catch with the ear alone. There may very well have been some idea of mourning in Bach's mind when he wrote it, for the counter-subject, though but slightly related to the falling quavers of the prelude, is a figure that was used to represent tears in Bach's early 'Capriccio on the departure of a brother', where, of course, it is used with humorous intention. Apart from the inversion of the subject in the alto part of bar 20 and the bass part of bar 32, there are no structural points calling for special notice.

i. 15. *In G major* (*3-part fugue*)

This gay prelude has undergone the process of expansion that we have noticed in comparing Forkel's version of several of the preludes; this time only three bars are added near the end; as usual, the shorter version is the earlier of the two. Professor Tovey's suggestions about the kinds of touch to be employed here are of great value.

The fugue has a subject that seems to be a glorification of the ordinary turn, and indeed it might easily be translated into the language of the dance, with two pirouettes followed by leaps in each part; the style is so ornamental that very often only two parts are required to make it effective. Inversion takes place at bar 20, both of subject and counter-subject, and there is an interesting stretto at bars 51 and 52.

i. 16. *In G minor* (*4-part fugue*)

The prelude, with its poignant use of a high shake (was it not Mendelssohn who pointed out the eloquence of this device in expressing grief?) and its florid passages, has a lyrical beauty that is rare even with Bach, and that can hardly have occurred before his time. The group at the end of bar 8, left hand, has more meaning if it is taken as in Professor Tovey's edition, with its rhythm corresponding to the succeeding figures, than as read by Mr. Brooke, following Bischoff. There is documentary evidence for both readings.

A piece so full of emotion as the fugue seems a little desecrated if we analyse it too minutely; yet it is only when we realize the impossibility of separating the two elements in Bach's music that we can hope to appreciate it properly. This fugue has some curious peculiarities in its first three bars; that the subject falls into two halves is evident to every one, and the second half, inverted, is used as the counter-subject, and is followed by the first half inverted. The fugue abounds in what may be called false entries, allusions to the theme which break off, and strettos over which the dryasdusts must shake their heads. There are few things in music, however, that stir the heart as this piece does, and the whole of life seems to be summed up when the subject appears again two bars before the end. It is one of the pieces to which the Bach-lover would be sure to fly in an hour of pain or bereavement, and from which he would be as sure to receive consolation and strength.

i. 17. *In A flat major* (*4-part fugue*)

Feminine grace and masculine vigour are both found in the beautiful prelude, not in contrast but in combination with each other, for each quality modifies the other without lessening its individuality. It is among the things most easy of comprehension in the whole book; yet there is evidence that it was not the spontaneous invention of a perfect moment, but the fruit of careful consideration. In one of the early editions (Hoffmeister's, which is held to represent Forkel's readings), bars 22–31 are slightly different from the accepted version, for the long and regular descending passage, first in the left hand and then in the right, is replaced by a far more conventional figure, apparently based on that which appears in bars 13–16. Take away the descending passage we know, and much of the character of the prelude would be lost; it is fairly certain, from external as well as internal evidence, that Hoffmeister represents an early 'state' of the music, just as Forkel so often gives a shortened form of several other preludes.

The fugue, for all its sensitive serenity and lyrical beauty, has a good many features which the dryasdusts would perhaps not approve, and which show us Bach in the act of trying various modifications of the fugal limitations. First, the counter-subject is not literally repeated every time when it should be; it preserves the regular semiquaver movement, but appears in many changed aspects; between bars 13 and 20 there comes a new 'exposition' of themes which leads from F minor to B flat minor; the way back is traced by fragments of the subject so presented that the hearer thinks a stretto must have begun. At bar 27 a complete exposition starts, in which the

'tonal' alteration of the theme is of great importance. The last three notes of the subject are dwelt upon in the answer, and soon generate a figure that plays a considerable part throughout the fugue. It might easily be mistaken for a regular inversion of the subject; for it gives the kind of satisfaction to the intelligent listener that he would derive from a regular inversion, something quite distinct from any pleasure he might take in the solution of a difficult problem, and touching very nearly the psychological source of musical enjoyment. The player who can bring out the subject in bar 10, while leaving the other parts clear though unemphatic, is far on his way to become a perfect Bach interpreter.

i. 18. *In G sharp minor, or A flat minor* (*4-part fugue*)

At first sight the 'motive' of this prelude seems like two repetitions of three rising semiquavers; but the sixth note is raised by one degree, and this change gives the whole character to the theme, the treatment of which may be commended to those who are apt to think that Beethoven invented the art of musical 'development'.

Another lesson in the same art can be found in the treatment of the subject of the fugue, for its last six notes provide the material for a number of characteristic episodes, and the two detached chords which often accompany this figure give to the fugue remarkable rhythmic point and interest. The counter-subject, copied from the opening notes of the subject, slightly altered, is combined with the rest of the material in a wonderful way; in bar 32, there is a difference of reading in the chief manuscripts about which much

ink has been spilt. The last quaver but one in the tenor part appears as B natural in the Novello edition, and as B sharp in Bischoff, Tovey, and the B.-G. editions. There is no doubt that the natural is the more likely reading, as the theme is thus presented in its original form; but for that very likeliness it is to be suspected by all who are accustomed to textual criticism, for how did the sharp find its way into the manuscripts if it was not meant to be there? The sixth quaver in the bass of this bar is another point of difference, as Bischoff and Brooke have F sharp, while Tovey upholds the E given in one of the manuscripts.

i. 19. *In A major* (*3-part fugue*)

For the masterly use and economy of its material, the Prelude in A stands almost alone. To trace the course of its three motives, the slow bass crotchets beginning chromatically, the semiquaver phrase of the soprano part, and the syncopated figure in the middle, is a fascinating work, but only to be undertaken by those who fully realize the beauty that Bach could bring out from the ingenious combinations in which he delighted. Professor Tovey calls it a little triple fugue, and gives valuable advice on its interpretation.

The first isolated note of the fugue is the key-note of the work in every sense; if it is not emphasized at each entry, the shape of the subject will not be discerned. The entry of the answer before the end of the subject turns the very opening into a stretto, and at the sixth bar Bach plays a practical joke on us, by persuading us that the fugue is in four parts. There is no doubt that is in three, but the way the entry

of the answer is managed in bar 6 is exactly the way in which a fourth voice would enter. This and other similar passages use the last note of some phrase as also the first (isolated) note of the subject or answer, and there is no real counter-subject until bar 23, when the semiquavers come in to carry on the interest of the fugue and lead it in a new direction. At bar 25 there is a kind of stretto, and again at bar 42 we seem aware that we are in the middle of a stretto, but as if we were unable to disentangle the threads of the beautiful fabric.

i. 20. *In A minor* (*4-part fugue*)

As an introduction to its fugue, the prelude in A minor establishes its right to consideration; but in itself it is not one of the most interesting pieces in the book, though at bars 17–19 there appears a melodic fragment of real beauty.

The very long and elaborate fugue loses no time in beginning the series of 'devices', for after the exposition there is, instead of the usual 'counter-exposition', a new exposition in inverted form. On its conclusion, at bar 28, there is a series of strettos, all at the distance of two crotchets, until at bar 45 the latter half of the subject is treated in stretto in all four voices. The strettos, which in all (direct and inverted) amount to fourteen, culminate at a pause with a six-part chord; three bars after this, on a tonic pedal, the *stretto maestrale* begins—three parts in direct and one in inverted form—and for a conclusion, the first five notes of the theme are played together in inverted and direct form each in two parts in thirds, below and above a tonic pedal. The fugue was intended for a pedal harpsichord, and the last five bars

require a long-held A which is impossible to reproduce on the pianoforte, for both hands are fully occupied with the upper part, unless some plan like those suggested by Bischoff and Tovey be adopted, and the pedal note be re-sounded, with the help of the sustaining pedal of the modern instrument. This fugue, with all its wealth of intricate treatment, is by no means a mere exhibition of astounding skill; but a most impressive and majestic piece of music, in which it is possible to take delight, even if one does not trouble to count up all the strettos and inversions.

i. 21. *In B flat major* (*3-part fugue*)

The prelude and fugue in B flat express pure happiness, and if the little melody suggested in the top notes of the figure in the prelude tantalizes us by disappearing after two bars, we must be thankful that so it has been delivered from the fate of the first prelude and from the unholy hands of the 'meditator'. In some copies and editions the full chords are marked 'adagio' and the following demisemiquaver passages 'presto', but if they are taken in strict time there will be plenty of contrast between the two. In some editions, too, there is a single bass note, or an octave B flat added at the very end; but there is no good authority for this, and after the fairy-like figure has soared away the added note seems to bring us to earth again with a bump. Professor Tovey calls it 'perhaps the most Philistine single printed chord in the whole history of music'.

The fugue has a subject of four bars long, and its material is apt to reappear in various forms; the counter-subject, too, is very important, and has three

distinct phrases which are combined in many ways. First, at bar 6, the right hand has a phrase which the ear accepts as an inversion of the subject, though it is not actually one; in the next bar there are some repeated notes, followed by little groups of three semiquavers leading to a quaver. All these elements are made to generate the episodes. There is a real inversion of the theme at bar 19 in the bass; but it is only used as an episode, and at bar 35 there is a kind of stretto at the distance of two bars instead of four. Note the ingenious fingering of the last four bars by Mr. Samuel in the Tovey edition.

i. 22. *In B flat minor* (*5-part fugue*)

Like the eighth prelude, the twenty-second seems to have come out of some Passion Music; but the former is a picture of sublime suffering, and the latter a prayer that will not be denied. Sometimes we feel as if the last remaining veil would be torn down, and we should know exactly what was the thought in the mind of the suppliant; no words could match the fervour of pleading, and the abandonment of devotion, that are expressed in the climax, just before the close, where voice after voice crowds in to urge some human need.

The five-part fugue is a worthy companion to this eloquent prelude, and even in Bach's work it holds a very special place of honour. It is one of the cases in which every effort we make to grasp the structure adds greatly to our enjoyment, and a good many of the marvels it contains are at once evident to those who look at it simply as a beautiful piece of music, while the further we explore it the warmer will

become our love. The subject, with its descent of a fourth, and (after a rest) its leap to the ninth above, is arresting to the ear at once, and the 'tonal' answer is as satisfying to the ear as it is to the scientist. The descending crotchets after the 'leap' are constantly appearing in the episodes and elsewhere, together with the little pair of quavers in the counter-subject, and in such a way that often we are under the impression that we must have missed one of the entries, so authoritatively do they come in. At the same time there are places where the opening notes seem to be half covered up in chords, and might be supposed to be false entries; for even here Bach could not quite exclude his humour or resist the temptation to confound the purists of his time. The counter-exposition, beginning at bar 25, has the five entries, though the last is delayed. The stretto, which begins at bar 50, prepares player and listener for the wonders of the final stretto; for the second note of the subject is the first note of the answer, so that the natural phrasing of the opening, in which the second minim would be slightly less emphatic than the first, can no longer be given, since the same note must do duty for the end of one pair and the beginning of the next. All we can do is to emphasize each minim as it comes. At bar 55 two parts enter together, with the crotchets in thirds, and these produce a most interesting episode that leads to the wonderful *stretto maestrale* beginning at bar 67, where each part enters at the distance of a minim, and as before, each minim, except the first and last, must do double duty. It is only by careful marking of the natural phrasing of the original theme that the meaning of the subject can be brought out at this point, for otherwise there is a danger of supposing the theme to begin with a single note, instead of

the two minims. The actual ending is hardly less magical in effect, for the minims of the subject and the descending crotchets are worked together with the effect of yet another stretto.

i. 23. *In B major (4-part fugue)*

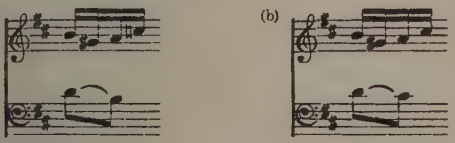
The delicate prelude in B is a perfect illustration of Bach's skill in turning what seems commonplace material into something of exquisite quality; the little turn of semiquavers, and the rising crotchets of the middle part, together with a figure of quavers starting at bar 9, provide all the thematic suggestion; the first figure is prettily inverted five bars before the end.

The graceful subject of the fugue ends with a shake (not present in all the authorities); in such cases it is the rule that any ornament in the subject should be repeated in the parallel places afterwards, and it is possible to play the shake at nearly all the places where the subject and answer occur, and no objection could be made if the shakes were given (Novello's edition omits all but the first). The answer is tonally modified in an unusual way. At bar 16, where the alto part has the subject again, the bass gives a kind of forewarning that the theme is going to be inverted, and this inversion duly comes in two bars afterwards, with the answer (also inverted) in attendance. At bar 21 the bass anticipates the place of its entry, thus making a stretto with the inverted alto part, though itself is in direct motion. The weaving of the countersubject is very beautiful.

i. 24. *In B minor* (*4-part fugue*)

The prelude in B minor has a rather more formal cut than most of the preludes, for its two sections (like many in book ii) are repeated, as if it were a movement from a suite. The regular quavers of the bass go on with hardly an interruption, and the two parts in the right hand are treated in imitation, though there is no strict or even actual canon. The direction 'Andante' is in the autograph.

The 'Largo' of the fugue is also Bach's, as well as the marks of phrasing over the pairs of quavers in the subject. The third beat of bar 4 has a curious variant, for in one of the most authoritative manuscripts it stands thus (a):



while in another this reading appears to have been substituted (not impossibly by Bach) for the text (b) as it stands in Novello's and many good editions, although Bischoff, Riemann, Tovey, and the B.-G. edition prefer the reading quoted at (a). This no doubt conforms closely to the rule that the dominant in the subject must be 'answered' by the tonic; but the progression in the earlier text is so much more pleasing, and sounds so much more natural (apart from the fact that later on in the fugue this form is uniformly used), that there is every excuse for adopting it even if it were not supported. See Tovey on the whole question.

The counter-subject falls naturally into three divisions: a semiquaver figure, a series of five descending crotchets, and another semiquaver figure, which last, imitated immediately it comes in, plays a very important part throughout the fugue. At bar 19 Bach plays with us again with a 'false entry', as the tenor part has the first three notes of the theme and then breaks off, making its real entry two bars later. It plays the same trick at bar 28, not making its real entry till bar 30. Can we doubt that this was done with humorous intention, notwithstanding the seriousness of the fugue? Bits of the counter-subject are tossed about and inverted. At bars 34–35, and again at bars 43–44, there are imitations which lead us to expect regular strettos, but the part which has started them soon leaves off and turns its attention to something else. In two places (bars 36 and 63) Professor Tovey supplies in the margin the form which Bach would undoubtedly have given to the soprano part had his clavichord possessed any notes above C.

The implied uncertainty in Bach's mind as to the correction of the more agreeable progression in deference to the rules, and the numerous departures from the stereotyped rules, lead us to believe that in the closing fugue of the first instalment of his great work, he was bent on showing that the forms are after all only the means to the end, that end being the creation of noble music. 'Fugues', he seems to say, 'were made for music, not music for fugues.' And of the nobility of this music there can be no doubt.

'THE MUSICAL PILGRIM'

General Editor *Dr. Arthur Somervell*

The '48'

Bach's Wohltemperirtes Clavier

BY

J. A. FULLER-MAITLAND

BOOK II

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BOOK II

WHAT is commonly called the second part of the *Wohltemperirtes Clavier* did not receive that title from Bach himself, who merely named it 'Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues'. But it is beyond doubt that in adopting the same elaborate plan of key-succession as had been used in the earlier collection, he meant the second set of pieces to be a counterpart to the first. By 1744, when the collection was completed, the dispute as to the Temperament question had ceased to be violent. The system of Equal Temperament had been generally adopted; for Gottlieb Muffat in his *Componimenti Musicali* (*circa* 1737) uses the key of B flat minor, which would hardly have been tolerable in the old days.

A certain number of the second set of preludes and fugues were actually composed in Bach's earlier life, and were incorporated in the later collection, being transposed where the original key did not suit the scheme; so that in the second book we cannot profess to trace an advance in maturity, or any very striking difference in style from the first book. One thing may be noticed, however, that while in the first book a good many of the preludes seem to have had an educational purpose and to have been turned into works of art by the addition of some passage which gives them emotional value, those in the second book are, almost without exception, complete poems in themselves.

For many years it was supposed that no approxi-

mately complete autograph manuscript of the second book was in existence, and statements to this effect were made by various editors, even by so careful a writer as Spitta; although as far back as 1842 Mendelssohn had seen in London the autograph of nearly all the contents of the second book, which was then in the possession of a Mr. Emett, who had bought it at Clementi's sale. In 1896 the manuscript was bequeathed by Miss Eliza Wesley to the British Museum, and since it came there, two of the pairs of pieces originally missing from it have been restored, so that now it is complete, with the exception of three pairs (ii. 4, ii. 5, and ii. 12).

Such a document, it stands to reason, is of the highest value to those who wish to have the pure text of the work; for the autograph must represent the text as Bach composed it, and even if some of the early copies made by his pupils contain readings that are evidently improvements on the first idea—and there are not a few instances of this—yet in many other cases where the other manuscripts have a variety of readings, the evidence for which is evenly balanced, the testimony of the autograph may turn the scale one way or the other. So far, the accessibility of the autograph has borne little fruit. Mr. Frederick Westlake, in the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary*, and Professor Ebenezer Prout in the *Monthly Musical Record* for March and April 1896, gave a list of many of the points in which the English manuscript differed from Kroll's (B.-G.) edition, and these were taken on trust by Herr A. Dörffel and incorporated in vol. xlv of the B.-G. edition. These variants, however, represent but a very small proportion of the points that should have been recorded. Of course many differences are in regard to tiny details, such as slurs

and other things which many people think trivial; but in the case of a work like the '48', surely no detail, however minute, is to be disregarded, and we must regret that only those variants which had already been noted in the B.-G. edition have been referred to in the two admirable editions lately published in England, Professor Tovey's, fingered by Mr. Harold Samuel and published by the Associated Board of the R.A.M. and the R.C.M., and Mr. Harold Brooke's, published by Novello & Co. A very curious thing emerges from the comparison of the manuscript with the edition of Bischoff, although the English autograph had not been made accessible when he wrote. In many cases he gives a reading for which there was not a great weight of evidence in the copies, and in the great majority of these his conjectures are supported by the autograph.

ii. 1. *In C major (3-part fugue)*

The first prelude of the second part seems to have undergone a double process of improvement, as it exists in three different forms. The first and shortest, in an autograph (Hauser) and in a transcript by J. P. Kellner, is given in the B.-G. edition, vol. xxxvi, p. 224, where the careful fingering of the autograph is of great interest. It is also given by Bischoff as an appendix to his vol. vi, but he omits the fingering. The second form is considerably longer, but has not the demisemiquavers of the opening bars, and differs in some other details from the third version. The second is in the British Museum autograph, and is printed in extenso in the B.-G. xlv. 243. There is here a most instructive alteration, for bars 15–20 are scratched out and the version we now know substituted. There is no doubt that the alterations were made by Bach himself, and, as in all such cases, it is of the greatest value and interest to trace the process by which the perfection of the piece was attained. For at the outset of the second book we must be struck by the mature gravity of the opening, which nevertheless does not exclude grace. A similar process of revision may be studied in the fugue, which appears as 'fughetta' (B.-G. xxxvi. 224) in common time, so that one of its bars represents two of the later version. Like the prelude, it is fingered; it has also a number of extra ornaments, implying that this was a version meant for the harpsichord. It is also shorter by eight bars (16 of 2–4 time) than the accepted

text. In the British Museum autograph we can watch the transition from one to the other; for at bar 67 of the later version, instead of the semiquavers of the middle part and the syncopation in the upper, there are four simple quavers which in the earliest version are followed by the final chord. Here the ending of the fugue is prolonged mainly according to the course of the later version.

The style of the fugue is oddly different from that of its prelude, for there is a feeling of artless gaiety about it, and there are no wonderful exhibitions of learning. At bar 13 it seems as if the episode set out to be a stretto, but it is only imitation between the two upper parts, while continuous semiquavers go on in the left hand.

ii. 2. *In C minor* (*4-part fugue*)

At first sight the regular figure of the prelude suggests that it is another of those which were meant to help the Bach boys in their technical studies, but it very soon becomes apparent that the interest of the piece is far greater and its purpose far higher. Like some part of a suite, it is two sections, each marked to be repeated; and as in the suites, the first part lands us in the relative major of the key, and the second, by a rather longer way, back to the original C minor. In the British Museum autograph, and in Kirnberger's MS. (Amalienbibliothek, No. 49), the little trills in bars 2 and 4 of the second section appear over the second semiquaver in each group, instead of the first (a reading unnoticed by those who have reported on the English manuscript), and the change from the usual version certainly adds piquancy to the passage.

The fugue is full of points of interest: first, it is only in three parts until the 19th bar, when the fourth voice is introduced; next, the answer, which has the orthodox B flat at first, has a B natural when it appears in the bass part in bar 7, and the subject, in bar 8, has a dotted rhythm instead of the regular quavers of the opening. When the bass part gets the subject at bar 11, note the poignancy of the G flat (Neapolitan sixth) in the alto part. At bar 14 there is an enchanting combination, for the subject in the upper part is imitated in the bass by the answer inverted, and between the two the subject is presented in augmentation. From this point up to bar 23, where a full close is reached, we have a wonderful series of strettos. More strettos, at shorter intervals, make up a kind of coda, in the course of which there are two delightful little interjections in the tenor part based on the theme, but with considerable modifications. This fugue is one of those where one is sometimes tempted to grudge the intricacies of the construction as likely to hinder the appreciation of the work as expressive music, and to grudge the emotional value of it as disturbing one's astonishment at the ease with which the themes are manipulated. In this, more than elsewhere, it is imperative to keep both aspects in mind.

ii. 3. *In C sharp major (3-part fugue)*

The 'Prelude' in C sharp is really a prelude and fughetta, which appears to have been at some time intended to be independent, though the fughetta can hardly have been supposed important enough to appear in its place in the collection, so that a longer fugue was put in after it. The prelude proper consists of

a very beautiful succession of harmonies, which in one version, as given by the 'Bückeburg Bach' (J. C. F. Bach, one of Sebastian's younger sons), exist as plain chords in the key of C, marked 'Arpeggio', the exact figure being left to the player's taste. But in the more important manuscripts the tenor part has a very beautiful melodic suggestion, rather than a melody, which exists in two forms, and both of which are given by Bischoff and in other editions, though Tovey's and Brooke's have only the one identical with Bischoff's main text. The B.-G. gives the other version as the main text, with Bischoff's main text in the margin, and the London autograph supports this, so that the evidence is pretty evenly balanced between the two, and as both are beautiful, the point is perhaps not of great importance. According to Türk's strict rule, the little appoggiatura in the second bar of the fughetta (marked 'Allegro' in the autograph) should be taken as a whole crotchet; but in practice it is perhaps better to accept Bischoff's recommendation to play it as a quaver. The quavers in bar 3 are distinctly marked staccato in the autograph and in the manuscripts which Bischoff used; it is to be regretted that Mr. Brooke has altered this effective phrasing in Novello's edition. Professor Tovey happily insists on its importance.

Like the prelude, the fugue was at first in C; for its original form, see B.-G. xxxvi. 225. It was only nineteen bars long, and the process of development can be followed in a way which with rare completeness lets the student into Bach's methods of working. No more instructive and delightful pastime can be devised than that of comparing the two minutely, and for those who are unfortunate enough to be debarred from reference to the B.-G. edition, a very fair idea of the

early version can be obtained by playing the following bars in succession, with the single change that the bars 9 and 10 of the complete fugue are represented by one bar to join bar 8 to bar 11. Bars 1, 2, 6, 7, 8 (one bar), 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 31, 32, and 33 give the harmonic framework, and the autograph shows that the semiquaver figuration that is so prominent in the ultimate version was only gradually brought into its present shape; for the demisemiquavers which begin at bar 8 were obviously added in, as the groups show stems for four even semiquavers, with the fifth note put in between the third and fourth of each group. In the later part of the fugue, these fillings-up were not completed; but the finished version shows that the figure was altered all through, so as to prepare for the rush of demisemiquavers five bars before the end. In the first version we have the surprising stretto at the very beginning, where the third voice enters with an inversion of the subject; there are all sorts of playful treatments of the theme, and several more strettos. At bar 18 the theme (inverted) is brought in in diminution, though it is not carried far. At bar 25 the inverted theme is answered by the direct theme at the usual distance, and between the two the theme is brought in in augmentation. It is especially desirable that the student who has been keen enough to work through the many interesting points of structure here indicated should play the fugue through for the sake of its musical beauty, and should realize the quiet gaiety it expresses.

ii. 4. *In C sharp minor* (*3-part fugue*)

This prelude and fugue, like the next, is missing from the London autograph. The abundance of ornaments in the prelude suggests that the version we know has been thought of for the harpsichord rather than the clavichord, and on the piano there is no doubt that the melodious beauty of the piece will be best brought out if the trills and mordent are left out, and the appoggiaturas interpreted according to Türk's strict rule, and held for the value of two-thirds of the dotted note which they generally precede. Brooke's direction 'quasi solo' is an excellent guide to the way it will be most effective. At the same time due regard must be given to the other parts, for the whole is a masterpiece of free three-part writing.

The mirth of the fugue is in sharp contrast with the gravity of the prelude; the never-ceasing semiquaver triplets are apt to blind us to the fact that it is a work of great elaboration. Exposition and counter-exposition carry us to bar 24, where there is a new exposition of the inverted subject, and a counter-subject built on a quaver followed by a semiquaver. As soon as the three parts have entered, the subject is re-stated (bar 30), and soon (bar 35) there comes in a new counter-subject, a descending passage of a dotted crotchet followed by two dotted quavers. A long episode, in which the first notes of the theme are played with in delightful fashion, leads to another exposition, but with the voices at longer intervals from each other—a kind of reversed stretto—and this to the coda, where the principal materials are worked together.

ii. 5. *In D major* (*4-part fugue*)

The brilliant prelude in D has much in common with the gigue-form, for it is in two sections, and the second inverts the theme of the first, though it is much longer than most of the similar movements in the suites. After the soul-stirring flourish of the first bar, the pairs of even quavers in the 2nd and 4th bars must be taken very strictly in time, as they only occur in this and the parallel places. In bar 7 begin the groups of a dotted quaver followed by a semiquaver, and here we must remember the convention (about which there is no dispute whatever among the old authorities) that these are to be played exactly as if they were a crotchet followed by a quaver. Thus, in bar 7, the second beat

is to be played thus :

But there is good reason to suppose that Professor Tovey is right in discrediting uniformity in this matter. In its return to the original key, and in the whole treatment, the prelude is a kind of prophecy of the sonata-form of later days.

It is well that such a fugue as this should be heralded by a flourish of trumpets, for with all its quiet movement, it is a wonder of ingenious structure and virile beauty. The first three notes make themselves prominent at all points, and not less important is the little phrase in the second bar, which, appearing as a counter-subject as soon as the second voice has

entered, is to be heard all through. It appears as a kind of stretto in bar 7, at a distance of two quavers; at bar 27 begins a close stretto in three parts, at the distance of one crotchet, and another at the same distance is at bar 33; at bar 40 the theme is re-stated, and at bar 43 it again appears in the bass with a curious chromatic alteration, preparing us for the *stretto maestrale*, where all four voices are brought in, in a manner which must for ever present a problem to the player. Already in bar 41 he has had to face the difficulty of making the subject clear when the tenor and bass parts cross; but later his powers are more severely taxed, for any phrasing he may have chosen for the presentation of the subject is contradicted by the manifold crossing of the parts. Professor Tovey suggests bringing out the alto and bass parts as against the other two. In the tenor of bar 45, while he preserves the usual reading of a G natural, he adds a G sharp in a marginal note. This is given by Mr. Brooke without alternative, though it is fairly certain that it is an addition in the few manuscripts which have it, put in to satisfy those who dreaded the effect of a false relation with the final quaver of the bar. The counter-subject, exquisitely repeated, brings the fugue to a lovely conclusion.

ii. 6. *In D minor* (*3-part fugue*)

We have another chance of seeing Bach in his workshop, for the prelude in D minor is given in the B.-G. edition, xxxvi, p. 226, in its earliest form from an autograph, while the London autograph has it in its ultimate form. In the latter, two bars (37 and 38) were left out when Bach made his fair copy; he put them in afterwards below the rest. The omission of

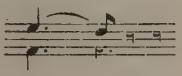
these two bars also occurs in one of the Berlin autographs, and it is just possible that they may have been an afterthought. For the rest, the early version yields a less valuable lesson than that of the fugue in C sharp (ii. 3). At the passage where the hands are involved with each other, the shape of the figure with rather dull alternations of two notes comes from the early version, but was afterwards modified so that the group at the beginning of each bar stood thus:

as given in the B.-G. edition and by Bischoff, Tovey, and others. It seems a pity that this reading, which is supported by the London autograph, should not have been adopted by Mr. Brooke; and in several other points, notably the omission of the demisemiquavers in bars 22 and 24, the interest of the figure is lessened by the reading he prefers.

The special charm of the fugue lies in the opposition of the semiquaver sextolets with the regular groups of four and the upward-striving of the former with the sedate, almost despondent, descent of quavers in the second bar of the subject. The counter-subject has the regular semiquavers, and great use is made of them; they appear inverted and are treated in stretto. A more or less free stretto with inversion of the subject comes at bar 10, and others, where both parts are inverted, in bars 17 to 21. Three bars before the end there is yet another incomplete stretto, two parts direct and one inverted.

ii. 7. *In E flat major* (*4-part fugue*)

The flowing grace of the E flat prelude makes it perhaps the easiest for the unlearned to appreciate at a first hearing, so that it should be one of the most frequented avenues to the great temple of art. The first three notes of the bass part are the germ of the whole, for the theme which occupies most of the attention is based on these, and the resource displayed in the handling of this group of notes, which at first seems rather meagre, being nothing but a slow mordent, must excite our admiration. In the second and fourth bars the first note in the right-hand part has an appoggiatura; it is pointed out by Bischoff that if Türk's rule is strictly observed, so that the E flat lasts for a crotchet, very ugly fourths are heard between this and the bass part; he recommends, therefore, that for once the appoggiatura should not be shortened, but lengthened, so that the grace-note occupies a dotted crotchet, thus:



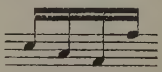
and the same holds good of course in bars 4 and 62. (See Tovey on this point.) Two out of several variants in the London autograph are noted by Westlake and copied by others; the rest of the variants are indeed of minor importance, such as a G for A flat in the middle of the right-hand chord in bar 20. In bar 56 the little semiquaver turn in the bass was smudged in the autograph, and Bach has written the notes 'B, A, G, A', below. It is perhaps only the out-and-out Bach-lover who will feel much interest in this, but to him no little touch of human frailty can seem trivial.

In the fugue there is only one point where the

manuscripts differ, and that is in bar 30, where some of them have a tie between the two B's of the tenor part, and some have two separate notes. The first group take the end of the former phrase to be identical with the fresh start of the subject, the others make the subject start with a shortened note at the half-bar, and this reading is supported by the autograph and by the entry of the bass part at the next bar. This bar with its stretto follows immediately upon the exposition of the four voices, and the other two voices have another stretto soon afterwards. There is a quaver figure unconnected with subject or counter-subject, which plays its part in the latter half of the fugue, and the coda begins with another stretto between the extreme parts. Riemann points out the vocal character of this fugue, and actually suggests words that seem to him appropriate; it is obvious that here, as in many other fugues, the range of each of the parts is kept strictly within the limits of the four principal voices, so that it is possible for good singers who can read well to vocalize them with very lovely effect. Such a study is useful in more ways than one, and must stimulate the love of Bach in every one who takes part in it.

ii. 8. *In D sharp minor* (*4-part fugue*)

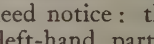
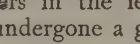
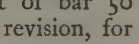
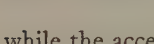
There are again several points in which the autograph differs from the accepted version of this prelude, but not a single one was noted by the earlier investigators of the manuscript. In bar 9, for example, the second group of semiquavers stands thus, as Bischoff gives it in his main text:



The validity of Türk's rule of the appoggiatura is proved at the end of each of the two sections of the prelude, because the first note of the pair of quavers, usually given as a quaver, is an appoggiatura in the autograph, with the main note as a crotchet, thus showing that the two ways of writing amounted to the same thing. With Bach's characteristic mastery, he makes the two parts of the prelude sound so rich that we can hardly believe the texture to be really so slight as it is.

It would take too long to give all the various readings of the fugue, and to point out the places where the autograph supports one or other; they are given with a fair amount of completeness by Bischoff and the B.-G. edition, and in their selection, Professor Tovey and Mr. Brooke, in full agreement, have been guided by musical considerations. The fugue is one of the saddest in the book, for the subject is one of the most deeply expressive in music. Little hopeful groups of three notes rising gradually form the counter-subject, but seem unable to assuage the sorrow of the theme. An important semiquaver figure comes in with the entry of the bass part, and the counter-exposition has only three entries, for before the fourth the alto part has anticipated it, to form a curious stretto at the interval of a ninth and the distance of one bar. At bar 32 the theme is re-stated, but with a whole tone instead of the semitone of the original; it reappears in the first form, towards the end, and is accompanied by chords in the three upper parts, which lead, at bar 43, to the simultaneous statement of the subject in the soprano and tenor parts, the latter being the inversion of the former.

ii. 9. *In E major* (*4-part fugue*)

The lovely prelude, with its three winding parts and its frequent use of 'pedal' points, is among the most poetical things in the work, and is a most fitting introduction to the glorious fugue, which, if a plébiscite of educated musicians were taken, would probably stand first of all in their affections. One point of textual criticism is all we need notice: the group of three semiquavers in the left-hand part of bar 50 seems to have undergone a good deal of revision, for while the accepted text has  , one set of the copies reads  and another  One of the most authoritative manuscripts reads  , and this has also the authority of the London autograph, so that we may be pretty sure that this, which is followed by Professor Tovey, represents the ultimate reading; for in the London autograph there are evident signs that one of the other readings was given, but the group of notes last quoted is clearly written above the erasure.

Well did Samuel Wesley call the ninth fugue 'The Saints in Glory' (*Bach Letters*); and by a curious coincidence, a theme almost identical with this subject was used by Brahms for the opening of the *Schicksalslied*, where, with a slight rhythmic difference, the same series of notes gives us the picture of the blissful state of the celestial citizens. It is as if the same window of heaven had been opened to the view of the two great masters. The exposition of the noble

subject, and its attendant counter-subject with the moving crotchets, is over by the ninth bar, and a close stretto begins in all four parts; a short episode leads to a new stretto at the distance of a bar, instead of the bar and a half of the opening. This, with another episode, brings us to bar 26, where, as the key modulates to C sharp minor, our ears are refreshed by a melody that we hardly recognize at first; but it is the subject in diminution, which is promptly imitated in the other parts; when the bass has it, the subject comes in not diminished, and the soprano part, with a drop of a fifth, enters with the inverted form of the diminished subject. Even this is not all, for at bar 35 a close stretto of the three lower parts is accompanied by the soprano part in the diminished and inverted form of the subject, but with a change into the counter-subject as it soars upward. The subject appears once more in a majestic march of the bass part for the close of the sublime work.

ii. 10. *In E minor* (*3-part fugue*)

The prelude is remarkable for the ingenuity of its imitations and for the skill with which the little theme is developed so as to modulate whither the composer wishes. Like so many of the preludes in the second book, it is in two sections, each repeated. These show the orthodox modulations and returns to the original key. The shakes in bar 29 and parallel places are of course intended to go on for four bars each time. In bars 57, 58, and 59, the London autograph puts a turn over the middle note of each group of three quavers. Tovey inserts the first and third as against the B.-G., &c., but omits the second.

The fugue has the longest subject of any of the '48', so that there is less opportunity than usual for the interesting devices of the fugue-form. There are five episodes, the first of which begins immediately after the exposition ends at bar 18; all the episodes are built on materials from the subject, for the counter-subject with its long notes serves mainly to keep things together. The coda, which begins after the fugue has as it were drawn up at a pause, is of great beauty and effect; but still the fugue is not one of the most attractive in the collection, although it is held to be a model of the form, so that Prout presents it in open score for the student's study (Fugue, p. 141).

ii. 11. *In F major* (*3-part fugue*)

The prelude in F major is remarkable for its economy of material, the whole being built on a conventional turn; the flowing quavers carry us along in a smooth, full stream of polyphony, and the device, so often used in the English suites and elsewhere, of constructing a chord by means of holding down the successive harmonic notes in an arpeggio or the like, is here especially prominent, and it gives a peculiar richness to the fabric.

The gentle gaiety of the fugue almost defies analysis, for after the exposition, and an additional entry of the bass voice, it proceeds on its way with scarcely any regard to the usual fugal devices. Bits of the theme or the counter-subject are constantly thrown about from one part to another, and there are two pedal points; the last entry of the bass is interesting, for at bar 89, instead of the subject in its first form, with the opening group of notes repeated, two notes higher, the bass part has four repetitions of the group,

rising by one note at a time. It is perhaps worth pointing out that the readings of the B.-G. edition and of Bischoff, which are closely followed by Professor Tovey and Mr. Brooke, are supported by the autograph in the case of the E naturals in bars 74 and 75; while the same authority exists for the low D (B.-G., Tovey, and Brooke) in the bass of bar 83, where Bischoff leaves a blank.

ii. 12. *In F minor (3-part fugue)*

The eloquent expression of the prelude is in nowise lessened by its rather formal design, and there is something curiously satisfying about the alternation of the first and second group of four-bar periods. Like so many preludes of the second book, it is in two parts, each to be repeated. This conventional 'repeat' suggests that such preludes were designed for the harpsichord rather than the clavichord, and the suggestion is supported by the presence in some manuscripts, though not in all, of a mordent on the second note of the fugue. As it is hardly possible to repeat this ornament whenever the subject appears, it is perhaps better on the piano, as on the clavichord, to leave it out. In bar 50, Professor Tovey's reading of the left-hand part is to be preferred to that of Mr. Brooke; both are well authenticated, but the former is not only the less smooth (and for that reason the more likely to be right), but it agrees with the rest of the sequence. It is unfortunate that the British Museum autograph lacks this prelude and fugue.

The fugue has a character which could be interpreted in two ways: it could be taken as a sprightly movement with some suggestion of a polka-rhythm, or as a contemplative piece, at a slower tempo, when

the smooth semiquaver passages of the latter part of the subject would seem more important than the staccato notes of the first portion. We might almost take the meditative prelude as a warning against the more frivolous interpretation, and certainly a serious mood suits the latter half of the fugue admirably. From bar 55 onwards the bass part seems to make vain efforts to recall the subject.

ii. 13. *In F sharp major (3-part fugue)*

The Prelude in F sharp is as remarkable for grace as for economy of material. The little descending passage of the opening appears in most of the editions in a rather ambiguous form; but in Novello's it is presented as all commentators have directed it to be played, even when they have retained the notation of the original. The dotted rhythm of the bass, and a figure of regular semiquavers make up the thematic substance of the piece, which is a wonderful example of the richness of effect that Bach could attain with only two parts. There are various slight differences of reading in the British Museum autograph, which gives most, though not the first, of the 'Vorschläge' that are in Bischoff's edition. If they are played, Türk's rule must be strictly obeyed, and the grace-note given the value of a whole crotchet in the first bar, and of a whole quaver in later cases.

The prelude, as we have seen, gets much of its charm from the interweaving of three phrases, and the fugue has a similar threefold design; the two halves of the subject are treated as more or less contrasting factors, and the counter-subject is combined with them in every possible arrangement. The

regular fugal pattern is not broken; but there are none of the special devices, and it can be enjoyed without reference to its technical structure, as a piece of very great eloquence and meaning. The E at the end of the soprano part in bar 46 is marked as natural in the British Museum MS., and is followed in Novello's edition, though not by Professor Tovey.

ii. 14. *In F sharp minor* (*3-part fugue*)

The beautiful prelude in F sharp minor is a striking example of the way in which the readings of the autograph have been treated by various editors. The list in Grove leaves out of account two of the most important variants; first, that in bar 7, the first group of notes in both hands contains semiquaver triplets, not one semiquaver followed by two demisemiquavers. In the next bar the autograph has the demisemiquavers given by Tovey, as against the usual reading. In that same bar 8, the last note of the tenor part is B descending to A at the beginning of bar 9. Although Bischoff made his edition before the London autograph was accessible, or even the small proportion of its readings registered in the B.-G. edition, he chose here, as in so many other cases, the reading that the London MS. supports. It is curious that Mr. Brooke in very many cases has set aside the readings of the autograph; while he follows it in bar 7, he rejects those in bar 8; in bar 14 he has not given the lowest note in the right-hand part as D sharp with the autograph, but as D natural, with the less authoritative manuscripts. In bar 18 the reading, which is one of the two reported in Grove, is set aside; but in this

case there is good reason to share his preference for the other, as

is more interesting than

In bar 27 there is no such reason for preferring the E natural in the third group of semiquavers, right hand, to the E sharp given by Bischoff and Tovey, and supported by the autograph. Again in bar 33, where the autograph supports Bischoff's and Tovey's reading and leaves a G sharp in the last semiquaver triplet but one, the Novello edition gives a G natural, which of course softens down the transition to G major in the next bar. As to the major or minor ending of the prelude, the authorities are, as in many similar cases, pretty evenly divided; but in this instance the weighty testimony of the autograph in favour of the former, should not have been ignored.

Whatever textual criticism may have to do with this prelude, nothing can obscure its expressive beauty, and the right clue to its interpretation is given by Mr. Brooke in the direction 'Solo, cantabile, e poco ad lib.'. It is one of the cases where words are felt to be far too clumsy to convey any impression of the deep and varying emotion of the music; 'play it, and see' is the only phrase that is of any use.

In the fugue there are happily no important varieties of reading; Grove gives most of what there are. In

general plan it is not unlike the five-part fugue in C sharp minor (i. 4), for after the regular exposition and some episodical matter built on the first three notes direct or inverted, we have a close in A major, and the introduction of a new subject of four descending notes, which are treated in stretto at once; the two are combined in several ways, and lead to a close in C sharp minor, where a third subject creeps in in semiquavers (bar 36–37); like the second subject, this is treated in stretto, and from this point to the end of the long fugue, we have the three subjects presented in an astounding variety of ways. Until the authorities are agreed on the proper title for such fugues as these two (some call them 'fugues with two counter-subjects'; others, 'triple fugues'), we must rest content to enjoy them as creations of the greatest beauty which happen to be built on very intricate plans.

ii. 15. *In G major* (*3-part fugue*)

The British Museum is the fortunate possessor of two autographs of this prelude and fugue; the second (Add. MS. 38068) is a single page bound up with the autograph of the bulk of the second book (Add. MS. 35021). In an interesting article on various points in the '48', in the *Musical Times* for December 1923 and January 1924, the writer contends for the introduction of a C sharp into the seventh bar of this prelude; but none of the usual editions give it, and both the London autographs and the best manuscripts in Germany support its omission. The prelude is in two (repeated) sections, the first leading into the dominant key and the second returning to the tonic, according to the usual plan. The swaying movement

above the pedal note at the opening is most attractive; and though the look of the passages on paper suggests that, like so many of the preludes in the first book, it served as a study, yet none of the preludes has a more engaging demeanour. There exist two other preludes in the same key, designed, no doubt at different times, to precede the 'fughetta' which is a kind of sketch for the one we now have. One of these two preludes (B.-G. xxxvi) expresses the same suave mood as the piece just discussed; it also begins with a pedal, and has the gentle motion in sixths. The other is a good deal less interesting; both, together with the 'fughetta', are given in Bischoff's edition as an appendix to the second book; in Peters, 4518; and in the B.-G. edition, xxxvi.

The development of the fugue we know from the 'fughetta' is most interesting as an illustration of Bach's power of self-criticism; the counter-subject in the sketch is composed of repeated quavers that are of very little interest, and they are replaced by the beautiful figuration from bar 17 onwards. The bass is hardly changed from what we know until bar 41, when the upper part alone is retained; bars 53–65 are entirely new, and the passage contains, like so many of the preludes in the first book, a cadenza-like scale that leads back to a fresh statement of the first subject which is almost identical with the form it had in the sketch. The appoggiatura on the last note should be taken as a full crotchet. Each of the alternative readings of bar 60 given by Tovey is supported by one of the two London MSS.

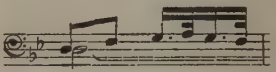
ii. 16. *In G minor* (*4-part fugue*)

In this prelude there is an interesting little detail which shows that the London autograph was the source from which the group of manuscripts known as the 'Altnikol Group' was copied. In bar 16 the minim G in the alto part is given in the 'Altnikol' MSS. as two crotchets, whether tied together or independent; and the autograph shows that Bach had reached the end of a line on the first beat of the bar, and had to begin a fresh line with the second beat; this involved putting a crotchet at the end of the one line, and another tied to it at the beginning of the other; the two being obviously the equivalent of a single minim. So the two crotchets were retained with punctilious accuracy by the copyist, and the tie was removed by some one who did not understand why two crotchets were written where one minim would have sufficed. The point is a very small one, but undoubtedly increases the authority of the autograph. At bar 9 there is a variant of some importance in the left-hand part, and neither reading seems of paramount authority or musical value. The B.-G. and Bischoff give this as the main text:

following the London MS. and an autograph in Berlin; in the margin they add this:

from some manuscripts of the 'Altnikol' group.

It is this reading that is preferred by Tovey and Brooke. The Peters edition has



Apart from such hair-splitting, the prelude suggests some majestic tragedy that 'in sceptred pall comes sweeping by', for the rhythm with its dotted semiquavers suggests the pompous style of the French overtures of Bach's time, and its stateliness is not without a touch of artificiality.

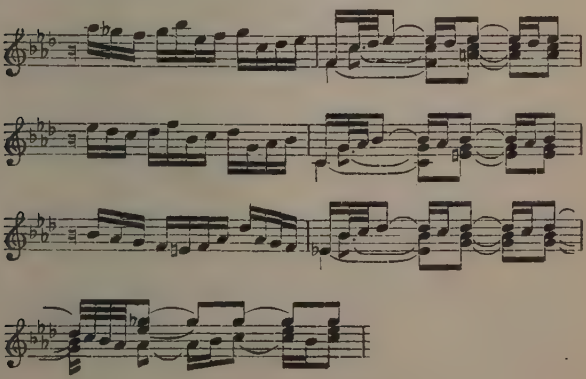
There is only one important point of textual criticism in the fugue, although many of the tied notes are given as repeated notes in some manuscripts and as tied in others: in bar 77, last beat, the group of four semiquavers in the alto part is preceded in some manuscripts by a flat, rejected by most of the editors; but it appears quite distinctly in the London autograph, though its presence was ignored by the writer in Grove's *Dictionary* as well as in the Tovey and Brooke editions.

The tragic character of the prelude is carried out in the fugue, which begins with a subject that must remind most people of the 'Es muss sein' of Beethoven, and will perhaps suggest to others the knocking at the door in *Macbeth*. The seven reiterated notes of the fourth bar play a very prominent part throughout, and so does the main counter-subject. After the extended counter-exposition we find the theme entering in two parts at once, in thirds, and presently in sixths; at bar 59 the counter-subject is combined with it in the same way, so that two sets of thirds are going on simultaneously. At bar 75 the counter-subject is treated in stretto, and in a final

statement of the subject the three rising notes of the counter-subject are used to introduce the emphatic crotchets of the opening. In the last bar but one, the rise of three notes up to the E flat is duly written out in the B.-G., Bischoff, and Tovey editions as well as in the autograph; it is a pity that in the Novello edition it is replaced by a sign of which the meaning is not generally known in the present day.

ii. 17. *In A flat* (*4-part fugue*)

The lovely and appealing prelude derives all its thematic material from the first two bars, and is a striking instance of Bach's economy in the use of themes, for the interest of the piece is kept up through its 77 bars. There are a good many differences of reading among the manuscripts, but the most important is one of which some part was included in the article in Grove. In the London autograph, bars 53–59 stand thus (right-hand part only):



It is of course not a matter of one reading being right and the other wrong, for there is no doubt that Bach wrote both, and though it is hard to say which of the two represents his ultimate choice, we must recognize the 'infinite capacity for taking pains' which was Bach's throughout his life. The editors are probably right in preferring the usual text of the passage.

The fugue with its most attractive theme runs a fairly simple course, with few or none of the devices that are so common elsewhere. Bach must have been in love with the theme, for he allows it to enter no less than fifteen times, and the last entry, 3 bars before the end, is in a middle part, and five voices are for a short time employed. At bar 13 there is a very interesting departure from convention; the stately descent of crotchets which forms the main counter-subject is usually transposed when it accompanies the subject, as in bar 6; but at the later point the subject enters in the bass with the crotchets of the counter-subject untransposed.

ii. 18. *In G sharp minor* (*3-part fugue*)

The prelude is one of those which bear traces of being intended for the harpsichord, since the words 'piano' and 'forte' occur in the autographs at bars 3 and 5 respectively, indicating a change of keyboard at these points, and certainly implying a similar change at corresponding places. It is in two sections (repeated), like so many in the second book, with the usual modulation to the dominant and back. It would take too long to discuss the very numerous differences of reading, for which the student must be referred to Bischoff's and Tovey's editions.

The same restful, plaintive mood as that of the prelude prevails in the fugue, which, taken as pure music, is one of the most expressive lullabies in the world. It is a double fugue, using that term in the sense in which two of the other fugues in the collection (i. 4 and ii. 14) are triple fugues, i.e. that it is built on two subjects, as they on three; each subject has its own exposition completed before the entry of the next, and they are only combined after each has been thus introduced. There is no example in the '48' of the stricter form to which the names are usually given, where the subjects enter simultaneously. The second subject enters at bar 61, and the two are combined from bar 97 onwards.

ii. 19. *In A major* (*3-part fugue*)

The prelude shows how fugal writing had become a second nature to Bach; like many of the gigues in the suites, it begins as if it were an accompanied fugue, and even the rule about tonal answers is obeyed, for the upper voice has a rising fourth to begin with, and the second a rising fifth; these two parts twine about each other, and soon lure the bass part to join in their gracious dance. At bar 9 there is a charming inversion carried through all three parts, and from bar 19 the theme is played with both in direct and inverted form.

The fugue continues and develops the idea of interwoven ornament, and the latter part of the theme is so like a regular inversion of the earlier part that it serves the aesthetic purpose of a real inversion; it is used for episodes and almost draws attention away from some of the entries, which moreover are disguised by having one or two notes put immediately

before them. See the bass entry at bar 16, and the soprano entry at bar 20. In bar 21 the London autograph has an interesting variant, for the second G in the soprano part has evidently had a natural before it; but as evidently the natural has been crossed out, so that G sharp (in the key) is implied. Thus Bischoff's and Tovey's reading is supported as against that of Mr. Brooke. In another place, too, the last bar but one, the autograph supports the same pair of editors, for the third group in the right-hand part has a D sharp at the end of it, which the Novello edition omits. The two cases are exactly similar, and the variants can be seen in the B.-G. edition, xiv. 265.

ii. 20. *In A minor* (*3-part fugue*)

The prelude in A minor is perhaps the most striking of the many instances in which Bach has taken the chromatic scale for his theme. With him it nearly always carries a suggestion of tears, as it confessedly does in the 'Capriccio on the Departure of a Brother' (see on i. 14). The inexorable succession of falling quavers and the florid figure that is so eloquent of grief, are handled with infinite skill; the two always appear together, now one and now the other being at the top. The two-section pattern and the orthodox opening of the second section with an inversion of the theme are adopted, and the character is changed, as hope seems about to dawn in the rising passages.

The fugue takes arms against a sea of troubles, and formerly held out a promise of ultimate victory in the 'tierce de Picardie' which appears in the London autograph, though not in the accepted texts. These, no doubt, represent Bach's ultimate decision. The first four notes of the theme were regarded as common

property in the eighteenth century. (Compare 'And with His stripes' in *The Messiah* and many other fugues of the time.) But it soon strikes out a line for itself; for the second group of notes is a repetition of the first, one note lower, and in quavers instead of crotchets. The counter-subject with its rapid demi-semiquavers gives strong individuality to the fugue, which is one of the most vigorous in the collection. The quavers of the theme are treated in stretto in bars 10–12 and again in bars 22–24. In bar 6 Mr. Brooke prefers the reading of the pupils' manuscripts to that of the autograph, and in bar 17 both he and Professor Tovey follow the pupils rather than the master.

ii. 21. *In B flat major* (*3-part fugue*)

The suave prelude is built on a descending scale which enters in a three-part imitation at the octave, and is soon inverted; at bar 8 there is a new subject starting with an arpeggio figure, treated in close imitation. This is the material of the piece, which is in two repeated sections. It is, as Riemann points out, in a kind of sonata form, for after development in section 2 the main theme is resumed (bar 49), and here there is a detail on which the reading of the London autograph has an important bearing. At the third repetition of the scale in bar 2 the A is altered to A flat, giving a Mixolydian touch; this is increased at the réprise in bar 49, for the second occurrence of the scale has it as well as the third (though Mr. Brooke has omitted it), and the trend of the whole passage is towards the keys of C minor and F minor. In bar 63 the third G in the alto part, and the D in the top and bottom parts, are all marked as flats in

the autograph. Mr. Brooke leaves all these as naturals, but Bischoff has conjectured the flats in the bar last named with his usual insight. The prelude draws up at a pause in bar 76, and a delightful coda is formed by the scale passage played simultaneously in two parts in the direct against the inverted form.

The readings of the autograph in the prelude are certainly as interesting as the accepted version, but the text of the fugue suggests that it represents an earlier state of the piece than the one we know. It is true that the even crotchets which appear as a counter-subject in bars 5–6 (B.-G. and Bischoff's margin, Tovey's main text) account for some of the later uses of this figure more clearly than is done by the substituted continuation of the quaver movement; in bar 78 it is pretty clear that our autograph was the source from which many copies were taken, for the last note in the right-hand part varies in the manuscripts between B and C, and in the London autograph there stands a large note which might easily be taken for either the one or the other. It is obvious that the B (B.-G. text, Bischoff's margin) represents the original shape of the answer more closely than does the C (B.-G. margin, Bischoff's text); the latter is preferred by Tovey and Brooke, who may have been misled by Prout's account of the autograph. The little slurs which appear over the pairs of quavers in bars 3 and 4, and are in the manuscripts, should be observed throughout the fugue at the parallel points.

ii. 22. *In B flat minor* (*4-part fugue*)

The glorious intricacy of the prelude springs from a very simple germ, as if Bach wanted to show what he could do with two adjacent notes of the scale. If we compare the third, fourth, and fifth notes of the opening theme, the bass in bar 2, and the middle part in bar 4, we shall find in all three the notes B flat, A and B flat. The first has them in the course of a flowing passage, and the last employs them to emphasize a forceful reiteration of three notes which provide a fine element of contrast.

The subject of the wonderful fugue is evidently derived from the same germ, for the whole theme might be subdivided into pairs of rising notes based on a single degree of the scale. A good many small variants in the London autograph were overlooked by those who made the cursory examination of the manuscript in the 'seventies', so that they are not referred to in either of the new English editions. The subject is diatonic, the counter-subject chromatic. Four bars after the exposition is finished (at bar 27) there is a stretto first between alto and tenor, and afterwards between soprano and bass. At bar 42 begins the treatment not only of the theme, but of all the contrapuntal material, in inversion; and again, soon after the exposition is complete, a stretto appears like that in bar 27, but inverted, first between tenor and soprano, and then between alto and bass. At bar 89 there is a yet more extraordinary stretto, between the bass and the alto parts, the former direct and the latter inverted. (This last entry is rather difficult to make clear on the piano; it would be impossible on the harpsichord, and the whole of this

prelude and fugue cry out for the clavichord as the proper medium.) At bar 96 the two upper parts enter together in sixths, and at a minim's distance the tenor and bass enter together with the inverted theme in thirds, and bring the fugue to a triumphant close. The word 'triumphant' will only be justified in the ears of the listener who is awake to the beauty of elaborate counterpoint; the hearer who is looking for emotions will find the fugue expressive of a sorrow bravely faced and realized as bringing strength to the character of the mourner.

ii. 23. *In B major* (*4-part fugue*)

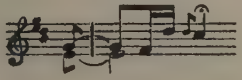
The prelude has such a variety of movement that one wonders what would have become of the material in the hands of some lesser composer; and those who have ploughed the weary wastes of C. P. E. Bach's solo sonatas will realize what is meant by the dullness begotten of perpetual change. But Sebastian Bach, as we might expect, knows how to weave together diverse strands into a connected whole; and the piece does not suggest any want of homogeneity, although the first two bars have one kind of figure and the next six bars another, while from bar 17 to bar 23 there are passages in which only a single part is employed. In bar 45 (last bar but one) the London autograph supports the reading of the B.-G. edition, Bischoff, and Tovey, not that of Mr. Brooke, which comes from the 'Altnikol' group of manuscripts.

The splendid fugue has the regular exposition with an additional entry of the bass voice, and after a dominant close a new subject in quavers is started in the soprano voice; this is not treated separately with its own exposition, like two others of this book

(4 and 14), but is at once combined with the solemn minims of the first theme. At bar 35, after three of the parts have entered with the new theme, there is one of those touches of humour that are more common in the first book than in the second, where Bach deceives us with what appears to be an entry in the tenor voice, just before the real entry of the bass comes in. There is a kind of coda beginning at bar 75 which sums up the whole fugue and breathes peace after the strife of the two contrasting themes, in the course of which the original counter-subject ran some danger of being squeezed out. One bit of textual criticism: at bar 70 a double-sharp has been prefixed to the C (second note in the alto part) in Novello's edition, which, though unsupported by the weight of manuscript authority, exactly corresponds with the sequence two bars earlier.

ii. 24. *In B minor* (*3-part fugue*)

In both the modern English editions of this prelude the editors have followed a single copy made by Altnikol, and have halved the value of the notes as they appear in the usual text and in the London autograph. There the word 'Allegro' has been prefixed to the piece by Bach, and the 'Andantino' of the transformed version results in a pace very much the same to the ear, but conveying to the player rather a different idea of the character of the prelude. In most other details of the piece the autograph has been faithfully followed, but the little group of notes that lead to the pause in bar 29 (bar 57 of the original) is—according to the autograph—



as Tovey's margin. On the whole, the pensive expression of the prelude is perhaps more likely to be realized in the version with the altered values, and the latest editors are thereby justified.

If Bach could be supposed to have intended the forty-eighth of his fugues as the crown and climax of a masterpiece, we should be obliged to confess that its jaunty character comes short of fulfilment of such an intention; but it would probably be equally apt and equally untrue to suggest that he expresses in this fugue his pleasure at having completed his task, and at getting back to his favourite key of B minor. The octaves in the third and fourth bars of the subject give to the whole a saltatory character, and a second counter-subject which enters at bar 29 has wide stretches which, taken together with those of the subject, make the fugue by no means easy to interpret even on the piano or clavichord, while on the harpsichord it could hardly be intelligible at all. There are various little strettos, as at bars 15–17, 26–28, and 69–71; but for the rest, the attention is taken up mainly by the latter part of the subject and a beautiful episode which begins chromatically at bar 50. The opening notes of the theme take their revenge at the very end, where they bring the fugue to a close without reference to their usurping continuation. It is to be regretted that Mr. Brooke has left out the appoggiaturas at bars 46 and 100, as well as the major close, which last appears in the autograph, though without the appoggiatura.

'THE MUSICAL PILGRIM'

Edited by Dr. Arthur Somervell

The Keyboard Suites *of* J. S. BACH

by J. A. Fuller-Maitland

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I. *The Suite-Form*

The plan of grouping a number of short musical pieces into a 'suite' would not seem to require much explanation, but some writers have taken great pains to gain popularity for their theory that at some time or other in the eighteenth century a number of German musicians of cosmopolitan tastes settled upon a certain succession of dance-tunes, choosing them to illustrate the characteristics of various nationalities. Thus the serious nature of the German was represented by the 'Allemande', the fire of the Italian by the 'Courante' or 'Coranto', the romantic gloom of the Spaniard by the Sarabande, the gaiety of the Frenchman by the Gavotte, the Bourrée, and the Minuet, and the mirth of the English by the Jig. It is tacitly implied that the process was conscious and deliberate, but in fact the history of the form is less straightforward than this. For its origin we must go back to the sixteenth century, when we find the custom well established of grouping dances in pairs, called Pavans and Galliards respectively. In the English Virginal books there are a large number of these pairs of dances; many of the couples are on the same theme, and all in the same key. Johann Ghro issued a book of *Paduanen und Galliards* in 1604, and it is quite certain that the practice of arranging dances in couples was widespread and lasting; for down to the time of Jane Austen we find references to the custom, and these are made in a way that shows it to have been usual enough to need no word of explanation. 'She stood up with him for the next pair of

dances' is a phrase of frequent occurrence in her novels, though whether the contrast between the measure of the two dances was still preserved we are not told. This contrast was the chief characteristic of the older pairs of dances, the Pavan being stately and in quadruple time, while the Galliard was in triple time and of a livelier measure.

Although these actual dance-forms were no longer in use when the great suites were composed, yet the idea of contrast, and of a regular uniformity of sequence, no doubt subsisted, and bore witness to the parentage of the Suite as we know it in Bach. Identity of key, too, was considered essential, although occasionally an excursion was made in the 'trio' of the minuet or kindred pieces to the relative minor, or to the tonic major of a minor key. This convention had a fairly distant ancestry, for it was in the days of the lute that it arose. Collections of songs with lute accompaniment are nearly always found to be arranged so that a group of songs in one key is followed by a group in another key; a certain amount of retuning was required if the key was changed, so that there was a very practical reason for the fashion, from which even Bach did not feel justified in departing, although in his other works he is evidently fully aware of the relief to the ear that is felt when a new movement introduces a new tonality.

From the earliest groups of pieces to which the name Suite was applied, down to the days of the crowning achievement of Bach, certain movements were treated as fixed points, and their order was seldom or never changed. These were the Allemande, the Courante, and the Sarabande. In John Blow's fourth suite, and in William Croft's first, the Sarabande precedes the Courante, but the very great

majority of suites before Bach preserve the usual arrangement. Some composers of suites occasionally left out one or other of these three chief movements; in fact, Handel very seldom has all three; but the order, when all are present, is nearly always the same.[1]

The ALLEMANDE. Considerably before the date when artistic music began in Germany, the 'Alman' was in general use as a dance. The *N. E. D.* gives a quotation from *The Complaynt of Scotland*, 1549, in which the 'almain haye' is described as 'the dance of all Christian men'. In a later quotation from Cotgrave, 1611, the fairly common phrase 'an almain- or almond-leape' is defined as 'trois pas et un saut'. This hardly agrees with Morley's description of the Alman as 'a more heauie daunce than this [the Galliard] (fitlie representing the nature of the people, whose name it carieth), so that no extraordinarie motions are vsed in the dauncing of it. It is made of strains, sometimes two, sometimes three, and euerie straine is made by foure, but you must marke that the foure of the pauan measure is in *dupla* proportion to the foure of the *Alman* measure.'[2] In Morley's days the Alman generally began on the first beat of the bar (there is one instance in the Fitzwilliam

[1] In Bach, the order of these fixed points is constant, alike in the suites for keyboard and in those for other instruments. Two of the three 'Partitas' for violin solo have all three in the usual positions, and the third has little besides the 'Galanterien', though it ends with a Gigue. The six suites for violoncello solo are on the same pattern, and all begin with preludes and end with gigues. The orchestral suites or 'overtures' are less formal in arrangement; none have Allemandes, that in C has a Courante, and that in B minor a Sarabande, but, in the rest, the lighter movements prevail; all have preludes. In a suite for harpsichord and violin we find the Courante separated from the Sarabande by an 'entrée' and a 'rondeau', while there is no Allemande.

[2] *Introduction to Practicall Musicke*, p. 181.

Virginal Book where a single semiquaver anticipates the first beat), but later the first beat was always preceded by one or three semiquavers.

The COURANTE or CORRENTE. The two forms of the name, which was originally 'Coranto', are held by Spitta and others to indicate two very different types of movements in Bach's suites. Thus 'Corrente' is applied (not always by Bach himself) to the simpler 'Italian' form, in which the quavers run on continuously in three-four time. The French form of the word, Courante, implies a more highly organized type in which 3/2 and 6/4 rhythms are found side by side and sometimes in beautiful collision. It is hardly fanciful to describe Brahms's Capriccio in C sharp minor, Op. 76, No. 3, as a glorified Courante.

The SARABANDE. The Spanish contribution to the suite provides the grave, fiery dignity that is a relief among the gayer movements. Yet rhythmically, it is in some sort the counterpart of the ancient Galliard, just as the Allemande has a good deal of the character of the Pavan.

The GIGUE. Next in importance to the three fixed points we have considered comes the Gigue, the name of which was used in French in two ways, implying a double derivation. Its first use was as the name of an instrument of the violin family, from which the German Geige was derived. In course of time the word in French became obsolete, and it is quite certainly not the source of our English word 'jig', which is always used of a dance, or of music accompanying such a dance. There is little doubt that our own word is the origin of the later French word 'gigue', as the name of a dance. Handel uses the form 'Jigg' like the English composers of the virginal period, and we need not hesitate to claim the type as the English

contribution to the suite-form. Its position as the closing movement of very nearly all the suites in which it occurs is more uniform than its measure, for instances are found of 3/8, 3/4, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8, 9/16, 24/16, and even quadruple time. Like the Courante and other movements already mentioned, the Gigue is generally in two sections, each being repeated.

Into this framework of the suite were introduced several shorter pieces, called 'Intermezzi' or 'Galanterien', consisting of dance-movements taken from French forms, such as the MINUET, the GAVOTTE, the BOURRÉE, and the PASSEPIED. The first and last of these were for the most part in triple time, the others always in duple common time, with this difference, that the Bourrée begins with the last crotchet of the bar while the Gavotte should always begin at the half-bar. These movements were very often provided with what was called an 'alternativo', or in later times a 'trio', that is, a short piece contrasted in style, though not always in key, and implying a repetition of the main dance after it. In the case of the Gavotte and Bourrée, the 'alternativo' is often in the 'musette' style, that is, on a held or repeated tonic bass in imitation of the drone of the 'Musette' or bagpipe.

The orthodox place for these Intermezzi was immediately before the Gigue, and with the ARIA, a short movement in square time, sometimes, as in the Partitas, preceding the Sarabande, the scheme was complete, all but the PRELUDE, which ranged from a mere flourish such as we find in Handel and many of the earlier suite-writers, up to the glorious compositions with which Bach crowned the structure of the 'English Suites', and which represent the highest point to which instrumental design of that

kind ever reached. The presence of a Prelude was optional; there is none, for example, in the 'French Suites'.

Soon after the death of Bach, the suite-form was superseded by the nobler form called the Sonata, and there are few suites of importance after this date. Even before that, the pattern above described was sometimes very loosely imitated, and Couperin's 'Ordres' show little or no conformity with the usual type, being pieces of varying number, with or without obvious reference to the different accepted forms, but all provided with fancy names. Some were undoubtedly meant to be played in succession, as the names have some connexion; but many are quite independent. Domenico Scarlatti called his hundreds of short movements 'Sonatas', and the word 'suite' was not applied to them as meaning groups of pieces, although Roseingrave entitles his collection of 42 Scarlatti sonatas, 'Forty-Two Suits of Lessons'; it may have been this use of the term which led von Bülow to arrange 18 of the 'sonatas' into something more or less like the suite-form, and it is to be regretted that the monumental edition of Signor Longo has followed his example, grouping the pieces according to uniformity of key, but with little more resemblance to the true suite-structure. Of course, many modern composers have written what they call suites, some with deliberate adoption of the old style, and others with so loose an adaptation of the accepted forms that they have little or nothing in common with the form as used by Bach.

Bach wrote 23 complete suites for harpsichord, and besides these there are two fragmentary works in the form, one or two arranged from violin compositions, and various single movements, mostly allemandes and

minuets. There are also two suites of doubtful authenticity, included in the appendix to vol. xlii (i) of the great edition of the *Bach-Gesellschaft*. These will be discussed in detail in the following chapters, and here it may be well to say that one and all are intended to be played on the harpsichord; they do not require the special sensitiveness and tone-gradation of the clavichord, but demand the strong contrasts of the harpsichord, and all have a certain element of display, rather than the intimate emotional power that is characteristic of the 'Wohltemperirtes Clavier' or the 'Chromatic Fantasia'. The inner connexion between the movements of a suite is decidedly less than that between the movements of a sonata, and while it may seem to savour a little of vandalism to perform in public a single movement from one of the sonatas of a later day, no blame could attach to the performance of separate movements of a suite.

II. *The 'French' Suites*

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xiii and xlv (i); Peters, 2,748; Bischoff, vol. ii.)

THE name by which these six compositions are known was not bestowed by Bach himself. In one of the autograph sources of the pieces, the title stands 'Sex Suiten pur le Clavesin compossee par Mos. J. S. Bach', and the appearance of some of the suites of the set in a book made by or for Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena, shows that they were written for her special delectation. As the book is dated 1722, we know that the bulk of the suites were written

before that date. Some words which appear on the title-page, 'anti-Calvinismus und Christen-Schule, item anti-Melancholicus', are interpreted, as Sir Hubert Parry tells us, 'as a little hit at the unsympathetic attitude of the Pietists towards music'. Later investigations have shown that the words are merely a memorandum of three books by one G. Pfeifer which Bach intended to buy, and which were found in his possession at his death. Parry goes on: 'There is something specially attractive about the idea of Bach's making this collection of pieces for his wife to play, and the spirit of the works seems to suggest the tenderest and most loving relations between them, for the contents consist mainly of five of the groups of pieces known to the world in later times as the French Suites.'[1] The first suite, and part of the second, appear again in the later book also belonging to Anna Magdalena (dated 1725).

It has often been debated why the pieces acquired their collective title, and Spitta supposes that a certain affinity between them and some suites by Georg Böhm, who was strongly influenced by French art, may have been the reason; but this would appear almost too far-fetched an explanation. The suites are no doubt lighter in quality than the other sets, and as lightness was a characteristic of all French art (according to the Germans), the name may have been given as a kind of nickname by Bach's children, as seems to have happened again in the case of the 'English' Suites. The two names probably hang together, and were at first used merely as a handy way of distinguishing the two sets.

The English and French Suites were published in vol. xiii of the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition, but the

[1] Parry, *J. S. Bach*, p. 139.

manner in which they were edited left so much to be desired that they were re-issued, together with sundry other works, in vol. xlv (i), and are there furnished with careful and trustworthy information. A comparison of these two versions with the editions of Peters [1] and Bischoff [2] shows that there was not much variety in the text itself; the number and position of the usual ornaments, or 'agréments' as they were called, varies very considerably, and we may guess that their use, even in the days when the harpsichord alone was available for their performance, was largely a matter of individual taste. On the pianoforte very few are necessary or desirable.

No. 1 in D minor

The opening Allemande (for these Suites have no preludes), with its dignified and flowing strains, is a fine test of phrasing, and should on no account be taken too fast. Like the rest of the movements, it is in two sections, each directed to be repeated. On the harpsichord such repetition was by no means vain, for it was the established tradition that the second time was to be contrasted with the first by the use of different stops. The Courante keeps to the rhythm of three minims to the bar, but in the last bar of each section there is a hint of the measure called 6/4. The Sarabande is 'in a vein of acute yearning and passionate intensity which must be admitted to have an element of deep sadness in it'.[3] There is a very beautiful touch at the beginning of the second part, where the melody of the opening is taken as a bass,

[1] Peters, ed. 2,748.
[2] Bischoff's edition (Steingräber), vol. ii.
[3] Parry, p. 140.

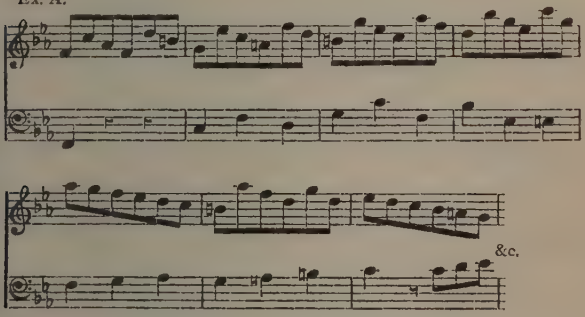
giving a prevailing dominant harmony instead of the former tonic. Much the same device adorns the second part of the first Minuet, and perhaps there is no point at which Bach's supremacy is more wonderfully displayed than in the openings of the second parts of his suite-movements. Just as Beethoven's mastery is most clearly to be seen at the corresponding point, the beginning of the 'working-out' section of his larger movements, so the older master exhibits here, not merely the ease and naturalness of his technical accomplishment, but the wealth of emotional power which has won the love of all educated musicians. The first part of Minuet I has an appoggiatura before its last note; this should be a B natural, and should be held for a full crotchet. At the 9th bar of the second part, the E natural of the middle voice against the E flat of the treble is right as given in Peters and by Bischoff; it has been 'improved' in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition. The Gigue is very unusual, as it is in common time, with the 'dotted' rhythm that is generally associated with the form known as that of the French overture. It opens fugally, and the theme is never unheard for very long in one position or another. In this movement the semiquavers should certainly be very short, in what was sometimes called the 'galant' manner.

No. 2 in C minor

The Allemande of the second Suite depends for its coherence upon the quaver figure in the bass, which should therefore be very carefully phrased and made comparatively prominent. A copy made by Gerber has a shortened variant of the end of the Allemande, quoted in Bischoff's foot-notes. The

Courante, which is more accurately a 'corrente', has the continuous quavers of the Italian type; from bar 14 of the second section there are no fewer than four distinct variants occupying the space between that bar and the seventh bar from the end. In Anna Magdalena's earlier book (1722) the passage stands [Ex. A], and in her second book (1725) it is clear that the composer wished to give more interest and point to the left-hand part as well as to extend

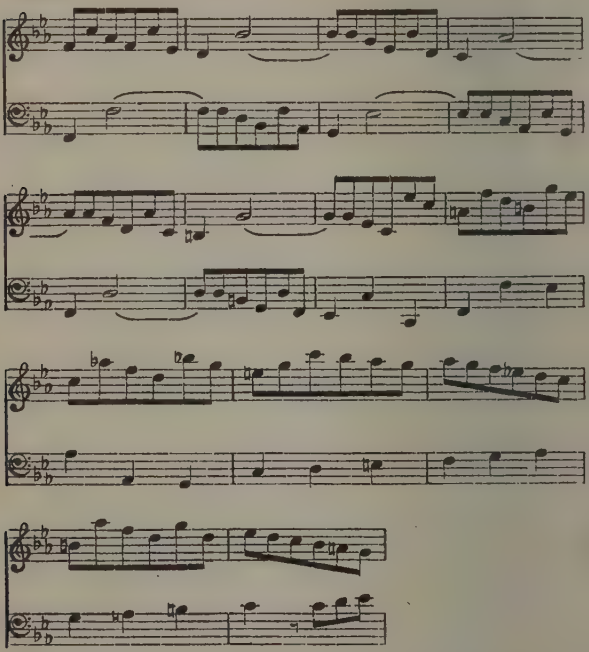
Ex. A.



the number of bars [Ex. B]. The upward leap in the second bar of this example is still further extended in the 'Gerber' transcript [Ex. C], and the little sequence with the mordent is the distinctive feature of the version of the so-called Rust-Wagner autograph, which is preferred in the Peters and Bischoff editions. The latter gives all the variants, and so does the *Bach-Gesellschaft*. It is impossible for us in the present day to be quite sure which of the three later versions represents Bach's mature decision, but the transition from the far less interesting reading of the wife's first book to that of her second is most

instructive to students, and illustrates well the master's infinite capacity for taking pains. The Sarabande is not particularly expressive or interesting, but the

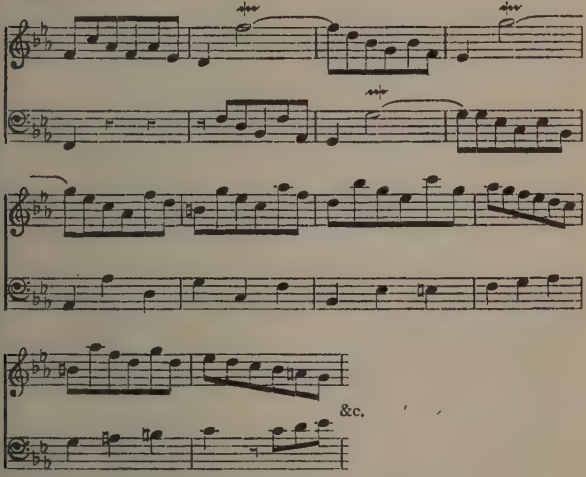
Ex. B.



succeeding Air is very graceful, and is an instance of Bach's skill in making two parts sound quite full. The flow of the Minuet is much increased if the little grace-note (F) between the G and F of the seventh bar, and the appoggiatura at the beginning

of the last bar but one, are retained and carefully observed. The little 'Trio' given in *Bach-Gesellschaft* xxxvi. 236 carries on the same movement of regular quavers, and there is nothing to suggest that the Minuet is meant to be played again after it; its omission in most of the manuscripts and in the editions

Ex. C.



of Peters and Bischoff is not to be regretted. The Gigue has a persistent rhythm of a semiquaver and a quaver preceding a dotted quaver, the last being on the first of the bar. It opens with a 'tonal' imitation at the fifth below, but the second part of the movement starts with an inversion of theme imitated at the octave. Bar 10 before the end has a variant of no great importance in the bass passage

(accepted by Bischoff), and the last two complete bars begin with an appoggiatura which, if played according to Türk's [1] rule, relieves the monotony of the insistent rhythm; the first is an F which must be held for a whole quaver, and the second in like manner for a whole crotchet, as both the main notes are dotted, and therefore lose two-thirds of their apparent value. The interest of the second suite is not as great as that of its companions.

No. 3 in B minor

The third French Suite begins with a reversal of the process just described, for the imitation between the two voices of the Allemande is at the octave in the first part and at the fifth (inverted) in the second. The whole suite gives colour to the theory—rather a fanciful one, perhaps—that the key of B minor was Bach's

[1] It has often been questioned whether the rules concerning the interpretation of the appoggiatura tabulated in Türk's treatise, *Klavierschule oder Anweisung zum Klavierspielen*, &c. (1789) can be taken as strictly applying to Bach; but although the treatise is of comparatively late date, yet it undoubtedly embodies the teaching of C. P. E. Bach, and there is no doubt that the same rule was followed in Quantz's flute treatise (1752), and by Marpurg in his *Die Kunst das Clavier zu spielen* (1750), both of which are so near Bach's date that it is only reasonable to assume that what was an accepted convention in their day must have been recognized in Bach's time; for if they either invented it, or modified an older rule, they would have laid more stress upon its execution than they do. See, on the whole question, Dannreuther's book on Ornamentation. It seems likely, as Spitta says, that Bach, in his music for the Church, preferred to write out the notes as they were to be sung; but it is probable that in compositions, such as the Suites, the 30 Variations, the Italian Concerto, &c., intended for performance by finished virtuosi, he would follow the conventions to which they were accustomed.

special favourite. The Courante is of the highly developed form with which the French name is associated; in the penultimate bar of the first part, and again in the second and fifth bars of the second part, we find the delightful cross-rhythm, or rather ambiguity of rhythm, which gives this form its special character. We may almost fancy it to be a humorous touch that the same kind of ambiguity occurs at the beginning of the Sarabande, as well as in several other places in the movement, for it is impossible that a listener without the music before him should not for a moment take the opening phrase as in 6/8 time instead of 3/4. In the third bar from the end, the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition is no doubt right in reading the first of the second group of semiquavers as G sharp; the B which appears in the Peters edition and in Bischoff's text has probably been substituted for the other in order to avoid the false relation with the last note of the same group. After the deep emotional power of this movement, the even flow of the Minuet comes with wonderful charm; bar 8 of the second part has E for the 5th quaver of the left hand, given by Bischoff on the authority of three manuscripts; the bass of the last eight bars exists in two forms, but that in the Peters edition and in that of Bischoff is the more interesting. The second Minuet or 'Trio' is more expressive than the first, and requires to be taken at a rather slower pace; the first is, of course, repeated after it. In one of the manuscripts there occurs another 'second minuet' or 'trio' instead of this one; it is a transposed version (from C minor to B minor) of the tenth of the 'Petits Préludes pour les Commençants'. The 'Anglaise', called a Gavotte in one of the manuscripts, appears before the Minuets in another, as in Bischoff's edition, but its proper

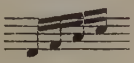
place would seem to be before the Gigue, as it separates two movements in triple time. Eight bars before the end the last note of the bass is B in the majority of the manuscripts; but the D which appears in some has the merit of avoiding consecutive octaves between the extreme parts. The Gigue has a gait so nearly identical with that of the Minuet as to lose some of its effectiveness, and it is curious to notice that its plan of imitation is the same as that of the Allemande, the first part being imitated at the octave below, the second at the fifth. At bar 19 of the second part Bischoff gives A as the last note of the left hand (of course without the tie to the G of the next bar), so as to make the imitation more exact.

No. 4 in E flat

In one of the manuscripts in the Berlin Royal Library the fourth French Suite begins with a 'Prelude', and contains a second Gavotte, as well as the Minuet which appears in the Peters and Bischoff editions, though not in the main text of the suites as given in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition. (The additions are in vol. xxxvi.) It has been held by some writers that this prelude was rejected as breaking the uniformity of pattern, since the suites of the set have no preludes; but if this piece is really by Bach—which I take leave to doubt—it is of considerably less interest and value than most of those preludes which are founded on a conventional arpeggio figure. The chords marked 'arpeggio' should be taken upwards and downwards like those in the 'Chromatic Fantasia'. The additional Gavotte, too, is not well contrasted with the Gavotte in the suite proper, but the Minuet is too good to be lost or ignored. The

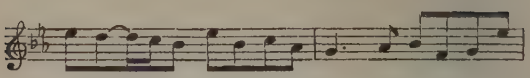
Peters edition of the whole suite is a good deal better than either of those in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* or than that of Bischoff.

The Allemande with its flowing semiquavers is worthy of special study, particularly for the manner in which the broken arpeggio figure



is made to serve both melodically and harmonically. The frequent divergences of reading between the Peters and the Bischoff editions are of slight importance. The Courante, with a 3/4 signature, is really a Corrente in 9/8, for the only exception to this rhythm is the very first note. It is worth reminding the student that the groups, mostly in the left-hand part, which are printed as a dotted quaver followed by a semiquaver, are to be played as a crotchet and a quaver, so as to correspond exactly with the first and third notes of the triplets. It would be a piece of absurd pedantry to treat them as if they were in opposition to the triplets, as they might be in modern music; the convention was fully understood in Bach's time, and authorities are unanimous on this point. The Sarabande is simple and very expressive; note the way the parts are interchanged. The 'mordents' on the minims of the upper part may with advantage be left out, as they do not make the identity of the figure any clearer when it occurs in other parts; if they are played they must be taken very quietly. Both parts of the Gavotte have direct imitation at the octave, and the direction 'scherzando' in the Peters edition gives the clue to its character. The treble of (complete) bars 4 and 5 stands in the

Bach-Gesellschaft and Bischoff editions as



which is rather easier of comprehension and more in keeping with the rest than the reading of the Peters edition. The Minuet, which, as stated above, is found in one of the later manuscripts, is a charming little movement. In the second bar of the second part the first note of the bass should probably be D, not B flat; the former is given in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition.

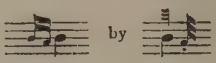
The Air, though light in style, is a beautiful example of form, alike in the structure of its second part with a kind of 'working-out' and return to the original strain, and in the ingenuity of the imitations, for this device is adopted here, though it is generally confined to the dance-measures of the suites. At first the descending scale is imitated at the octave below, but the second part has the figure inverted and imitated at the seventh below. The Gigue, which, by the way, has more orthodox inversions and imitations (first part direct, at the fourth above, second part, inverted at the fifth below), has a delicious elfin gaiety; and no English lover of Bach will play it less well for remembering the song, 'Oh dear! what can the matter be?' though there is little or no identity of notes.

No. 5 in G

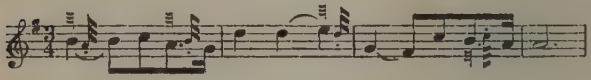
Of the fifth French Suite Sir Hubert Parry has said, 'It may be doubted if Bach ever wrote a work more completely serene, happy, and sparkling. The pure murmuring beauty of the Allemande, the gay

rush of the Courante, the dignified strength of the Sarabande, the sparkling vivacity of the Gavotte and the Bourrée (which has made the first one of Bach's most popular little movements), the truly wonderful and innocent tenderness of the Loure, and the supreme merriment and animation of the Gigue, make the whole series one of the most perfect little works of art in grouping, texture, spirit, and artistic finish ever produced by J. S. Bach.' So gracious is the gait from first to last, so easily grasped is the meaning, that very little is wanted by way of detailed commentary. The key-plan of all the movements is the same, and the second part of each, whether inverted or direct, always leads from the dominant to the tonic. The Allemande has irresistible grace and winning charm; the Courante has not the conflicting rhythm associated with the French type, but proceeds on its joyous course without interruption. The dignity which Parry speaks of in the Sarabande is very greatly enhanced if the ornaments are played, and if Türk's rule be strictly followed. In transferring harpsichord music to the modern piano, there is naturally some distaste for the multiplicity of little trills and mordents, which tend to obscure, so it is held, the course of the melody. When these are played on the harpsichord, one is hardly conscious of the three little taps caused by the two auxiliaries and the main note; but on the pianoforte they are unpleasantly noticeable. In rapid movements the 'rattle' does not so much matter, but in such places as this Sarabande, they are apt to become rather distracting to the hearer; yet if they are left out altogether, some of the character is lost. I find that it is a good plan to emphasize the main note and hold it down with a cantabile touch, striking the auxiliary note staccato and very softly,

immediately afterwards. In other words to replace

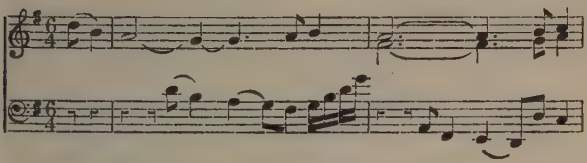


and trust to the sustaining power of the pianoforte to keep the main note sounding on after the auxiliary note has ceased. This gives the nearest possible approach to the harpsichord effect. The full length of the appoggiaturas gives great beauty to the flow of the melody. In the second bar it is true that to prolong the appoggiatura before the E to the prescribed length makes fifths with the tenor part; but there is every reason to suppose that appoggiaturas were regarded as outside the harmony, and therefore as free from such prohibitions. The first four bars of the Sarabande will therefore be played as follows:



The utmost care must be taken to play the auxiliary notes, here represented by demisemiquavers, almost as softly as possible. The Gavotte is such a perfect thing that it might be taken as the type of all that a Gavotte should be; the Bourrée is apt to lose distinctness of outline if the ornaments are played, and yet the longer trill in the first complete bar, and corresponding places, must be given, probably as a shake; it is quite pardonable to leave out the mordent on the first note of bars 1 and 5. In one of the manuscripts the next movement, the Loure, in 6/4 time, is oddly named 'Bourrée II', which one would think must be due to a clerical error. The

name, which is obviously allied to *lourd*, is that of a dance with a slide in it, as *lourer* is 'to slur'. Here the strict application of Türk's rule gives the following enchanting form to the opening



and must be applied all through the movement. Of the exquisite Gigue, Forkel makes the curious statement that 'only consonant intervals, especially thirds and sixths are used', which is hardly accurate. By its humour and buoyant gaiety, this Gigue rounds off the picture which the suite so unconsciously gives us of Bach's nature as it must have appeared in his quiet, uneventful home life. Where else but in Shakespeare do we find such a union of passionate emotion, unbridled mirth, and deep thought?

No. 6 in E

The last of the French Suites is especially rich in 'intermezzi', for four little pieces are found between the Sarabande and the Gigue. In the 'Gerber' MS. the Prelude in the same key from part I of the Wohltemperirtes Clavier (No. 9) is prefixed to this suite. The Allemande is of special interest on account of its form; at the eighth complete bar the even flow of semiquavers in the right hand ceases, and there is a regular cadence to the dominant, but there, while the semiquaver figure passes to the left hand,

the right hand has a new figure, and this new figure assumes great importance in the second part. It is hardly too fanciful to see here a foreshadowing of the 'binary' form which is the leading characteristic of the classical sonatas. The Courante, with a regular succession of semiquavers, has a number of bars in what is virtually a single part; and the whole movement suggests that it may have been intended for unaccompanied violin. The last note of the 11th bar in the left hand should probably be E (*Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff), not D sharp (Peters). The exquisite expressiveness of the Sarabande is much enhanced if we adopt the reading of the best manuscripts in bar 5, where the alto part has D instead of E for its first note, descending to C sharp, a minim held with the E (so in Bischoff). In like manner, the grace and vivacity of the Gavotte are increased if a suggestion made in vol. xlv of the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition be adopted; it may seem over-bold to alter the text without strong documentary evidence, but there is good reason for this suggestion, which is, that the figure of a quaver and two semiquavers in bars 3, 4, 7, and 8 should be changed into two semiquavers and a quaver, so as to correspond with bars 2 and 3 from the end. This also brings out the meaning of the opening theme of the Polonaise, which is evidently suggested by the little figure at the end of the Gavotte, just as the subject of Fugue 13 of the second book of the Wohltemperirtes Clavier, in F sharp major, is taken from the last notes of its prelude. The form of the Polonaise will surprise those who are only accustomed to the later polonaises, such as those of Chopin; but this serene type of the dance was common in the earlier days, and the many beautiful pieces in the form by W. F. Bach are mostly of

this type. The technical progress of this favourite son, and of Karl Philipp Emanuel, may very possibly have been kept in mind by their father when he wrote the lively Bourrée, since the last four bars of each part need the most careful, slow practice if they are to be mastered; and they are a useful test for the independence of the hands. The sedate Minuet separates this movement from the Gigue, with its charmingly wilful imitations. (Bischoff puts the Minuet between the Polonaise and the Bourrée, with some loss of contrast.) In bar 6 the last note of the left hand appears as A in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff editions, as D sharp in Peters. In the first complete bar of Part II, the fifth note in the right hand should be G sharp (as Bischoff), not F sharp (as Peters), according to the weight of manuscript authority.

I have thought it desirable to risk being tedious by referring in detail to the very large number of slight alterations in the text of the French Suites, as they illustrate Bach's enormous care and power of self-criticism very instructively. The admirable notes in Bischoff's edition summarize the long critical apparatus in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* preface to vol. xlv, and the Bach student cannot have a more profitable task than that of comparing the alterations, particularly those of the first and second suites, where Anna Magdalena's two books are the principal source of the works. It is not so much a case of a 'correct' text with many alterations due to transcribers' errors, as a gradual process that we are allowed to see going on in Bach's mind, as he improved his own creations during the three years between the dates of the two books. The variants of the final bars of the Courante of the C minor suite (see *ante*, pp. 15–17) are the most

conspicuous instance of Bach's never-ceasing search after perfection; but throughout the suites there are many passages in which the various textual alterations must have been due to the composer. From this point of view it is sincerely to be regretted that Anna Magdalena's second book breaks off in the middle of the second suite, but the authoritative transcripts are enough to show what trouble the master must have taken over his work.

III. *The 'English' Suites*

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, vol. xiii and xlv (i); Peters, 2,783; Bischoff, vol. ii.)

In the set of six Suites which have always been known by the name of the 'English' Suites, we reach the culminating point of Bach's work for the harpsichord, as distinguished from the other keyboard instruments of his time. The impression we receive from the French set is one of light-hearted grace, but here we find a grandeur, a depth of emotional power, and a fullness of treatment of which there are few traces in the earlier suites. Not that vivacity is absent, but it is found almost entirely in the 'intermezzi' of these suites.

The collective name perplexed all the writers on Bach, down to the time when the late Edward Dannreuther lit upon what must now be accepted as the true explanation. In a copy made by John Christian Bach, there occur the words 'fait pour les Anglois'. This was taken by Forkel to mean that they were 'made for an Englishman', but as the Englishman

has never been identified, we are driven to guess either that Forkel's command of French was imperfect, or that he assumes J. C. Bach to have made a slip of the pen. It is tempting to imagine that Bach was acquainted with the compositions of the English masters, and especially with the Suites of Purcell. (The interesting works by Purcell's contemporaries were hardly known in England, and Spitta's opinion that it is difficult to guess what English compositions there were from which Bach could have learnt no doubt represents the general conviction of the German musicians from Bach's time onwards.) The only piece of documentary evidence which we possess that any English music of the time was known in Germany is the fact that a famous organ toccata by Purcell existed in manuscript in Germany without the composer's name, and was actually included in the edition of the *Bach-Gesellschaft* as a doubtful work of Bach himself.

Mr. Dannreuther's account of the name seems a little far-fetched, but there is no reason to doubt its accuracy. There was a fashionable teacher in London named Dieupart at the beginning of the eighteenth century, who published at Amsterdam a set of six suites, the last of which was copied out by Bach. Besides this external evidence, there are many points in Dieupart's work which have obviously given suggestions to Bach; these are enumerated in Dannreuther's book on Ornamentation (i. 138), but the most striking instance is the Gigue from the end of Dieupart's first suite, in A major, which undoubtedly inspired the theme of the prelude to Bach's first suite, in the same key. Dannreuther gives a detailed analysis of the changes by which Bach turns a rather conventional movement into the fine prelude we know. The

student will find this analysis most helpful, and it will give him a new sense of Bach's greatness in the manipulation of themes. In a Royal Institution lecture, Dannreuther surmised that in consequence of these resemblances, Dieupart's suites were known in the Bach family as the 'English Suites', and that the name was transferred, for the sake of distinction, to the suites by Bach himself, which contained so remarkable a point of resemblance to the London teacher's compositions.

The English Suites are assigned by all the authorities to the Cöthen period of his life, and as a manuscript copy exists, made by a pupil, which bears the date 1724–7, it is hard to accept Sir Hubert Parry's opinion that these suites were later in date than the Partitas, since these latter are known to have been written, or at least finished off, in the years 1726–31.

No. 1 in A

The Prelude of the first suite has two introductory bars, which establish the key before the 'Dieupart' theme enters, and in the second of these we find a device peculiar to keyed instruments, of allowing the essential notes of the harmony to be sustained in a rapid passage, so that a full chord is obtained. It is not the first occurrence of this beautiful way of increasing the sonority of the instrument, but it is interesting to notice how frequent it is in these suites. It is prominent again in the fine seriousness of the Allemande. The first Courante has a regular 3/2 rhythm, broken only in the last bar of each part. The second Courante, which is followed by two very interesting variations, or 'doubles', has the varying rhythm throughout, and both the variations have the

same attractive ambiguity. Exactly how Bach intended the four little movements to be played does not appear; it may be supposed that the first Courante was to be repeated after the second of the 'doubles', but not between each of the subordinate movements. There are a large number of 'Vorschläge' or appoggiaturas in these sections in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition, and the student is recommended to apply Türk's rule to them, and only to discard it when really ugly dissonances are the result. In a great number of cases the Peters edition, which leaves out most of these ornaments, may well be followed, but if the 'Vorschläge' are played, it is well at least to try them according to the strict rule. There are some important ones (omitted in Peters) in the exquisite Sarabande, which is built on a theme very like that of the 'Slumber Song' in the Christmas Oratorio. The phrase-marks in the hilarious Bourrée must be carefully observed, and the repeated crotchets in the bass part of the second section are better taken in pairs, as in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition, and that of Bischoff, rather than in groups of four, as in Peters. The second Bourrée, after which the first is to be repeated, is the happiest contrast to the first, for it follows a murmuring course ('sempre legato' would be the modern direction), as a relief to the detached pairs of notes in its predecessor. The Gigue, which should be played rather sedately, begins with imitations at the octave below, and the inversion of the theme in the second part is imitated at the fifth below. The last five bars of each part are marked 'piano', no doubt indicating a change of keyboard on the harpsichord; this and similar directions are comparatively rare, and may be followed in this instance by the use of the soft pedal, to give the contrast of tone-quality.

No. 2 in A minor

The magnificent Prelude to the second English Suite is so effective and interesting that there is a temptation to overlook the wonderful skill with which it is constructed. It is in what Spitta calls the perfect aria-form in three sections, and the texture of each section is worthy of the closest analysis. The virile theme of the opening is tossed about from one part to the other, and the passages, showing some resemblance to those of the great fugue (with the 'arpeggio' prelude) in the same key, foreshadow the manner of treatment characteristic of a much later day. The second section, beginning

supplies what we may call the feminine interest in the story; after this theme has been announced, there is a momentary interruption by the first theme, and the whole manipulation of this section well repays minute study. It will be noticed that in the second bar of the above there is an appoggiatura which does not appear in the Peters edition; it is present in all the similar passages in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff editions, and no doubt on the harpsichord it brought out the pleading expression of the subject in a way that can be realized on the piano by a competent player without the ornament. The first section is repeated exactly for the close of the prelude. The Allemande shows no such economy of material, but is lavish in fine themes that for the most part receive little treatment or development. In the Courante,

bars 4–6 have a 6/4 rhythm in contradiction of the prevailing 3/2. The deeply expressive Sarabande is followed by a decorated version headed 'les agréments de la même Sarabande', and Spitta considers that both versions were not intended to be played, but that the player was to be allowed to choose between them. The best way to settle the question is to play the simple version of each part first, and to give the ornamental version by way of repeat. It is much to be regretted that Bischoff, no doubt following the manuscripts a little too academically, gives only the bass of the ornamental version below the adorned part, though it is clearly desirable to repeat the harmonies which fill up the space in the simple version. In bar 8 of the ornamental version, the first note in the Peters edition clashes a B with a C; the C is read in one of the manuscripts, but is certainly an error, and there can be no excuse for putting the two together. In the last 8 bars there are important appoggiaturas, which, though written as semiquavers, should be taken according to Türk's rule, as full crotchets. The scurrying Bourrée is directed to be played 'alternativement' with its companion Bourrée (in the tonic major), that is with the usual return of the first piece after the second has been played. It seems bent on sweeping away any sentimental languor that might remain after the Sarabande, so as to get the hearer's mood back to the vigour of the Gigue, which for once has not an imitative beginning. According to some of the manuscripts there is a sign that after each of the two sections has been duly repeated, the whole Gigue is played through again (whether with or without the sectional repeats is not clear), but this would spoil the effect of the suite by making it too long.

No. 3 in G minor

The search for self-portraiture in the works of the great creative artists is perhaps dangerous, but there are occasions when the temptation is hard to resist, and this suite represents so fully so many sides of Bach's art that we can hardly help discerning corresponding traits in his personal character. No one who was not happy in his disposition and surroundings, at peace with himself and with all men, could conceivably have written such a thing as the Prelude, the very embodiment of mirth that is rooted in serenity, humour based on reason, and a virile energy that carries the movement along with infinite spirit. The way the parts enter at the beginning, tumbling down one after the other, makes the hearer fancy that many more than the actual four are employed. In the thoughtful optimism of the Allemande and the placid meditations of the Courante we seem to be shown the kind of philosophy that Bach attained in middle life, and these prepare us well for the deep emotion of the Sarabande, one of the most touching movements in music. As in the second suite, it is recommended that the ornamental version of each part should be played instead of the repeat. In the chord (arpeggio) at the beginning of each part there is a little diagonal stroke, in the first part between the G and the B flat, in the second part (the second chord of the first bar) between the B flat and the D. This, as explained by Bischoff, indicates that the intermediate note, A in the first case and C in the second, should be lightly touched and taken off at once. The long-held bass notes cannot be made to sustain the sound without reinforcement, even on the

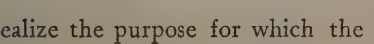
most sonorous modern pianos, and although the best harpsichords had a remarkable power of maintaining the sound, yet even there the bass can hardly have been audible at the seventh of the slow bars. It is perhaps worth mentioning that in the sixth bar of the second part of the ornamental version the last group of notes appears in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition as one semiquaver followed by six demisemiquavers. The reading adopted by the Peters and Bischoff editions seems more in conformity with the other groups of the kind, but they are none of them very easy to make clear to the hearer. In the next bar, the 7th, the last semiquaver of the first group in the left hand appears variously as D (*Bach-Gesellschaft*), A flat (Peters), and C natural (Bischoff); good manuscript authority exists for all three, but D seems the most reasonable, as corresponding with the parallel passage in the simple version. The jollity of the Gavotte, and the murmuring sweetness of its companion, the Musette, have won for these movements a rather unenviable degree of popularity; for all that, it is rare to hear the repeated G's in the left-hand part of the first Gavotte quite satisfactorily played, or their humour brought out; according to the best texts there is first a shake a bar long, with A flat as the auxiliary note, then two mordents (with F sharp for the auxiliary), the minim at the beginning of each of these bars being held simply, and last, a succession of nine quavers, which suggest some kind of rapid reiteration not possible in the present day, which we can only imitate by grouping the notes in pairs. Unless the second Gavotte is taken very quickly (it must not be slower than the first) the drone-bass will require reinforcement, and to preserve the rhythm the note should be struck again

at the half-bar, not on the first beat. The Gigue, which sets out as if it were going to be a three-part fugue, ends with a couple of bars that we may call a musical quip, and sums up the philosophy of the whole suite. 'Life', we hear Bach saying to us, 'has its sorrows as well as its joys, but the wise man will accept what comes, and a sense of humour never did anybody harm.'

No. 4 in F

The fourth of the English Suites is the gayest of the set, with the exuberance of healthy youth, in contrast to the ripe humour of some movements in the third suite. Only superficial critics will see in this contrast proof of an earlier date of composition, for such development as can be traced in Bach's style is confined to technical matters; all the human emotions seem always to have been at his command. The Prelude, built upon the interplay of two contrasting themes (bars 1 and 2), has many interesting episodes independent of these, and by the casual hearer it might easily be mistaken for a movement in the 'sonata form' of a later generation. The *naïveté* of the reiterated triplets in the Allemande will remind organists of the prelude to the 'little' fugue in the same key as this suite. The Courante runs a vigorous course, and, like that of the G minor suite, has no cross-rhythm until the last bar of each part. The Sarabande is appropriately expressive, but has considerably less emotional power than the other Sarabandes. The ornament in bar 6 is better as an acciaccatura (Peters) than as the appoggiatura given in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff. In the sixth bar before the end of the movement, at the second

crotchet of the left-hand part, the middle note of the chord is an A flat in the autograph manuscript; but in six other manuscripts the B flat is given as in the Peters edition. The editors of the later *Bach-Gesellschaft* volume, with Bischoff, acting on the principle that the more difficult reading is to be preferred, have given the note as A flat, interpreting it as the equivalent of G sharp. At bar 3 from the end, the application of Türk's rule gives us a suave progression in thirds between the treble and tenor parts, and the same rule adds considerably to the beauty of the second bar of the second Minuet, in which there is a hint of the 'musette' character; this may surely be taken a little more deliberately than the first Minuet. The horn subject of the Gigue is bandied about from one part to another in most attractive fashion. The figure of repeated A's which first appears in bar 6 of the second part has been sadly ill-treated by various editors in the matter of the mordents, which really indicate the emphasis to be placed on the second beat of each bar where they appear. As the other mordents do not appear in the manuscripts, modern editors have thought fit to supply the want, and to put mordents on the fourth beat of the bar as well, thus depriving the figure of its character. The pianist of the present day may be recommended to leave out all the mordents, and to lay an emphasis on the second beat of each bar of the figure



so as to realize the purpose for which the mordents were put in.

No. 5 in E minor

The whole of the E minor Suite, with one brilliant exception, breathes so austere an air that few outside the circle of avowed Bach-lovers are likely to hold it in special favour; but to those who have assimilated the master's idioms, and who can enter into his deeper moods, the work will always be dear. The grand Prelude, which is described by Spitta as a combination of the fugue with the aria-form, is one of the longest movements in the range of the suites, as well as one of the hardest to make intelligible to the hearer. The entries of the fugue subject are not always easy to bring out without exaggeration. The descending theme of the Allemande is at once imitated in the left hand in the second bar, and inverted at the beginning of the second part, in the bass. In one guise or other it pervades the whole movement. The Courante again has no suggestion of cross-rhythm until the last bar of each part (can it be a mere coincidence that none of the Courantes of the English Suites have the characteristic interplay of the two rhythms?), and its charm will be greatly increased if the grace-notes in bars 7 and 8 of part 1, and bars 3 and 15 of part 2, are taken as long appoggiaturas, and held for a whole crotchet. Those in the first part appear in Peters as acciaccaturas, but the longer ornament is rightly given in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff editions. The ornaments in part 2 must be restored in the later editions from the *Bach-Gesellschaft*. In the last bar but one there is a grace-note, given in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff as C sharp, in Peters as E. For the latter note there is good reason apart from authority, for the C sharp, if held for a crotchet, gives

consecutive octaves with the bass part. The Sarabande is very plaintive, and the way its slight material is used is most instructive. The employment of the opening theme for the final cadence is a beautiful touch, and the treatment of the 'gruppetto' in the second bar is a foreshadowing of the way in which Beethoven develops what looks like an unimportant group of notes into something rich and strange. The 'Passepied en Rondeau' is one of the most delicious things in music, and though the first strain must be repeated in all five times, the ear never tires of it, and any abbreviation of the various *da capo* directions which appear in Peters would be felt as a real loss. Both Passepieds have to be kept very low in tone, at least when they are played in their place in the suite; if they were taken out for a single performance the player would be excused who should introduce variety and contrast in the amount of tone employed; he would probably take the second Passepied more softly and a little slower than the first, and might take the last appearance of the main theme louder than the rest. The Gigue is a strange but perfectly successful experiment in chromatic treatment. The slurs over the second and third quavers of the main theme must be carefully observed if the movement is to be made clear. The fugato openings of both parts (the second inverted) are most interesting, and will be very instructive to the student of 'real' and 'tonal' answers. In the 14th bar the second semiquaver of the alto part should be C natural, as in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* editions, not C sharp, as Peters. The harsh effect is in keeping with the rest of the piece. In bar 26 the fifth of the group of semiquavers should no doubt be C sharp, as in Bischoff. (The absence of the accidental in Peters may be an oversight.) In

bars 15 and 14 from the end, the *Bach-Gesellschaft*, followed by Bischoff, reads three even quavers in the top part, but the third of the first bar and the first of the second have descending appoggiaturas; it is true that the strict interpretation of these gives a series of consecutive sevenths, but in any case the former bar has no very smooth progression, and the compromise offered in Peters is hardly satisfactory.

No. 6 in D minor

The long and splendid Prelude to the sixth English Suite is a fine example of the means of obtaining sonority by sustaining the notes of an arpeggio figure; one bar, marked 'Adagio', separates the introductory portion from the Allegro which, according to Spitta, combines the fugal form with that of the aria. The middle section of this, after which the first is repeated exactly, is based on a striking theme of five repeated quavers, the masterly treatment of which gives special character to the movement. At the 18th bar of the Allegro the E in the last group of semiquavers should, of course, be E flat, as in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff editions; in the Peters edition it is so given, but supplied conjecturally at the corresponding place in the repetition. A mood of grave contemplation distinguishes the Allemande and the Courante, and the Sarabande is a kind of expressive framework in which are set the manifold and subtle adornments of the 'Double'. In the penultimate bar of each section of the Sarabande a turn appears in the Peters edition; this should be a trill in the same place, as in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff editions. No more delightful relief from the solemnity of the foregoing movements can be imagined than the pair of Gavottes which are

among the best-known and best-loved things in Bach's keyboard music. The second Gavotte is properly described as a Musette, for the drone-bass, D, is uninterrupted throughout. The Gigue, for all its brilliance, sums up the austere mood of the whole, and is a most appropriate close to the series of masterpieces. Forkel quotes it as an example of the use of a 'pedal point' in the middle of a piece, and says of this movement rather naïvely, 'On a first hearing this Gigue, imperfectly rendered, may not sound well.' He goes on, 'But it grows more beautiful as it becomes more familiar, and what seemed harsh is found to be smooth and agreeable, until one never tires of playing and hearing it.'[1]

IV. *The Partitas*

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, iii; Peters, 2,746; Bischoff, iii.)

THERE is an annoying irregularity in the matter of the names of different forms of music in and about the eighteenth century. We have seen how 'Sonata' sometimes means a single movement, like those of Domenico Scarlatti, and sometimes bears its modern signification, of a work in several movements; 'Overture', in like manner, occasionally stands for a whole suite of pieces, though it is more often used of a continuous piece, generally consisting of an introduction and allegro; and the words 'Partie' and 'Partita' are used by Bach and by some of his predecessors as equivalent to our 'variation', as in the organ works,

[1] Forkel, *Johann Sebastian Bach* (C. Sanford Terry's translation), p. 78.

where we have 'Partite' used of successive variations on a chorale. The more usual meaning of the term, and one that is universally recognized in later times, is as the exact equivalent of 'Suite', and it is doubtless due to the six harpsichord 'Partite' of Bach that the name has at last become definite. The history of these six suites has presented a problem to more than one of Bach's biographers, for while their date seems definitely established, their texture is so much slighter than that of the English Suites that Sir Hubert Parry surmised them to be early pieces collected together, bearing no special relation to one another except identity of keys. What is certain about them is that they appeared successively in the years 1726–31; that the publication of 1726, consisting of the first Partita, was inscribed 'Op. 1', indicating that it was the first printed work of the master; and that in 1731 they were issued all together, with the title 'Clavierübung', a name borrowed from Kuhnau, who published collections with this title in 1689 and 1695. We learn from Forkel[1] that they won immediate success with the public. 'Such compositions for the Clavier', he says, 'had not been seen or heard before, and a man who could play them was sure of a success. Our young players to-day would profit by the study of them, so brilliant, agreeable, expressive, and original are they.' Parry's theory of an early date of origin is based on the argument that as Bach printed nothing for the keyboard before 1726, 'the dates at which the works were issued at least decided the latest dates which were possible for their composition; but, as will be seen in most cases, it left the limit very elastic in the other direction.'[2] This theory receives further

[1] Terry's translation, p. 116.

[2] C. H. H. Parry, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, p. 456.

support from the fact that Anna Magdalena's second book (1725) contains the 3rd and 6th Partitas, so that they at least were in existence some years before their publication. The versions there given (issued in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition, vol. xliii (ii), and in Bischoff) are most interesting to the student who can thus watch the process of the minute revision of certain things like figuration.

It is not unnatural that Bach should have chosen to give the public the kind of music that would be sure to be popular in the best sense, and that the yearly instalments of the *Clavierübung* should have been composed in a slighter style than those monumental works which were meant primarily for Bach's sons, and were circulated in manuscript copies among his intimates. There can be no question of Bach's having, at any time of his life, written down to meet the public taste; and after all, the contrast in style between the two collections is perhaps less violent than might be supposed.

A striking feature of the six Partitas is that each has a different title for its opening movement, and that these differ from each other in design as well as in name. The successive titles are: 1, Prelude; 2, Sinfonia; 3, Fantasia; 4, Overture; 5, Préambule; 6, Toccata.

No. 1 in B flat

The opening Prelude is a marvel of that grace which marks the whole suite. The little trills are necessary to its interpretation. The serene gaiety of the Allemande is in sharp contrast with the austerity of those in the English Suites, and the Courante (virtually in 9/8 time) has no opposition of rhythms,

although the notation looks as if the figure against were meant to be played as in modern music; it is, of course, not so, but the former group is to be played throughout as if it were . The elegiac Sarabande has ornamentation of rapid 'divisions', as they used to be called, the fantastic effect of which will be better brought out if the relative values of the notes be adhered to, than if the passages are taken *ad libitum*. The two Minuets, contrary to Bach's usual custom, are in the same key, but in different styles, the second having some of the characteristics of the Musette. If the appoggiaturas are taken at all, Türk's rule should be obeyed, and the grace-notes must sound as a minim in the first part, and as a crotchet in the second. The Gigue, which must owe something to the harpsichord works of Domenico Scarlatti in regard to the continual crossing of hands, is one of the most genial things in Bach; and in fact, if it were desired to introduce a partially educated musician to the world of Bach's music, no better gateway could be found than the first Partita as a whole.

No. 2 in C minor

It is impossible to suppose that the various names given to the introductory movements of the six Partitas were chosen at random, though some of them do not seem particularly applicable in the present day, when their meaning has been more exactly defined. The second Partita begins with a 'Sinfonia', and we may take it as foreshadowing the usage of modern times, since it is in three movements, a Grave, an Andante, and an Allegro. It is curious that the name 'Sinfonia' had been applied to the set of 15 'Inventions' in three parts, as if to distinguish

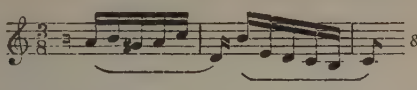
them from their companions in two parts. The name 'Sinfonia' was also given to the instrumental introduction in several of the church cantatas, and is generally applied to a single movement of a more or less elaborate character. This 'Sinfonia' has an opening on the pattern of the French overtures, and its massive style, with the 'dotted' rhythm so commonly employed, leads most effectively to the plaintive and melodious Andante, in which, over a regular bass of even quavers, a solo part wanders in passages of great beauty. The 'finale', as it may be called, has a *fugato* opening, and is in two parts only. The greater part of the Allemande is also in two parts; in the fifth (complete) bar the last note but one of the bass is given as F in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff editions, but the E flat preferred in Peters seems more characteristic. The usual change of rhythm at the close of each section of the Courante is made particularly prominent in this instance, though the Partitas contain only one other example of the Courante, properly so called, as distinguished from the Italian Corrente. The flowing and impassioned Sarabande throws into strong relief the curious resemblances in gait and mood that make the last two movements of the suite a little less effective than they might be if they were divided by something quieter. They are named 'Rondeau' and 'Caprice' respectively; in the former, four repetitions of the very original theme with its leaps of a seventh and its staccato phrases, are separated by smoother episodes (the subject on its last appearance is slightly modified); but it can hardly escape notice that this movement discounts some of the effect of the 'Caprice', which might well be taken as a musical portrait of Puck, so enchanting is its wayward humour. The absence of

any Gigue from this Partita, the similarity of the last two movements, and the title of the whole set as published ('Klavierübung bestehend in Präludien, Allemanden, Kouranten, Sarabanden, Giguen, Menuetten und andern Galanterien') give some support to Sir Hubert Parry's theory that the component parts of the Partitas were gathered together from various isolated movements, and were arranged in a more or less arbitrary manner, instead of showing a logical connexion among the movements such as we find in the French and English Suites.

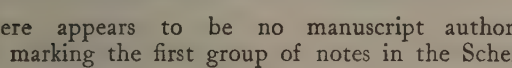
No. 3 in A minor

The introductory movement of the third Partita is styled 'Prelude' in Anna Magdalena's book, where there are small differences of reading, mostly showing that in preparing the work for publication Bach made it rather more elaborate and interesting. The name 'Fantasia' may seem a little inappropriate to the rather formal opening of the suite; but it must be remembered that before Bach's time the word implied none of the wayward variety that we associate with it in modern times. The early 'fantasies' or 'fancies' of the English composers were nearly always in a style that we should call fugal, and there is seldom any change of movement in them; it was not until later that the severer form was discarded, and the composer left free to indulge his fancy as he would. At first sight, the melodic progression may seem fantastic enough, for there are not a few unlikely intervals, but the key to the meaning of the piece is in the first two notes of the semiquaver group, for the rise of one degree of the scale goes pretty continuously through its course. The phrasing must be carefully

observed ; it is undoubtedly to be treated thus,



the second semiquaver of the bar being the first note of the phrase, and the first note of the bar the end of the phrase. The Allemande, which is even slower than is usual with such movements, is an example of the device, so common in the English Suites, of obtaining sonority by sustaining the harmonious notes of an arpeggio passage. The Courante is a fine specimen of the Italian 'corrente', and the final bars contain some interesting chromatic treatment. As the Allemande is more serious in mood than usual, so the Sarabande is correspondingly lighter, and might well rank as one of the 'Galanterien' of the suite. It is tempting to suppose that the point of the joke in the Burlesca is that the pair of rising notes referred to as the key to the Fantasia provides the material of this lively movement, which in Anna Magdalena's book is called a Minuet. The way the two parts join in a unison scale reminds one of a similar passage in the two-part fugue in E minor, No. 10 of the '48'. The bass of the following bars is surely wrongly phrased in the Peters edition (all the notes are marked staccato by Bischoff), and the meaning, as well as the supposed reference to the Fantasia, is better brought out if it is phrased thus,

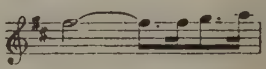


There appears to be no manuscript authority for marking the first group of notes in the Scherzo

with a sforzando, as both Peters and Bischoff agree in doing; but it is certainly quite effective, and would correspond to the usage of the harpsichord, where the first group would be taken on the lower manual, the rest on the upper. The Scherzo does not appear in Anna Magdalena's book. The Gigue, with its fugal opening and the usual inversion of the theme in the second section, is finely chromatic. The entries of the theme at the end of bars 10, 8, and 6 from the end are difficult to manage effectively, and must have been especially so on the harpsichord.

No. 4 in D

The fourth Partita has so striking a unity of style and mood, so great a similarity of themes, that it is impossible to accept, so far at least as this one suite is concerned, Sir Hubert Parry's theory that the component parts of the Partitas were unrelated movements, merely grouped according to keys. Indeed, Parry remarks that this Partita 'has a more homogeneous effect' than some of the others. The opening of the introductory movement seems to be used as a kind of motto throughout, though modified and adorned in all sorts of ways. The three rising notes at the end of this example



are employed as the groundwork of the Allemande and the Courante; they are prominent as an episode in the Aria, inverted in the Sarabande, and are the essential part of the theme in the Minuet; while they begin the subject of the second part of the Gigue. But without pressing the virtual identity of themes

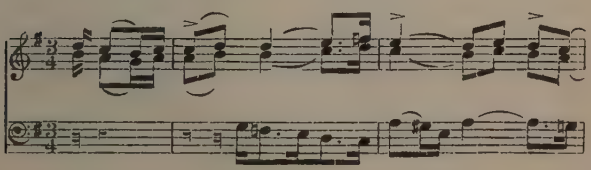
too far, it is beyond question that the whole Partita has a wonderful charm and expressiveness throughout. The *maestoso* opening of the Overture (the name needs no explanation) is most impressive, more particularly if the semiquavers after the dotted quavers are made very short, almost as if the dot were a double one. The ornaments, many of which have apparently been misplaced in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition, are essential, and Türk's rule as to the appoggiaturas can be applied with great effect. The Allegro has the usual *fugato* opening, and is peculiarly brilliant and eloquent. Ten bars from the end, the Bischoff edition begins the third group in the right hand with a pair of demisemiquavers, which should obviously be semiquavers. The Allemande is full of emotional quality, and the exquisite figure which enters at bar 13 is poignant and yet consolatory. Seven bars from the end, in the Peters edition, there is a misprint; the first note of the third group in the right hand should be F sharp tied to the previous note. The Courante is an interesting example of the 6/4 measure, though the time-signature is as usual 3/2. Spitta says of this movement that 'it is marked 3/2 in order to prevent the feeling of the two beats from becoming too strong. The time of the Courante was properly neither one nor the other, but a mixture of both. It was a rule that even passages in 6/4 time were to be played in 3/2 time, that is to say that in the case of phrases which were evidently, both by their formation and natural character, in 6/4, the remembrance of the 3/2 time was to be kept up by means of occasional 3/2 accentuation.'[1] He quotes a passage from Marpurg's *Kritische Briefe* to the same effect, ending with the words: 'The late Herr Capellmeister Bach

[1] Spitta, *J. S. Bach* (English translation), iii. 158.

has left us a sufficiency of genuine models of this proper Courante time.' The flowing beauty of this Courante is apt to make the player forget to recall to the hearers the fact that 3/2 is marked at the beginning. At the eighth complete bar of the second section there is an unfortunate misprint in the Peters edition; the first note of the right-hand part, and the first note after the group of three quavers, should be quavers, not crotchets. The delicate Aria, which, as before mentioned, precedes the Sarabande in this and the sixth Partita, seems to me to allude to the 'motto' theme in the third complete bar. The Sarabande has a strange halt in the second bar of each section; is it fanciful to imagine the halt to be called in order to bring out the motto theme, here used as preparatory to the long-held note? Apart from this, the movement is quite worthy of its companions. The Minuet begins with the rising motto disguised by a turn and an intercalated note, but its second part seems to have a more direct reference to it. In its second bar there is a single note occupying the last two beats of the three, like the 'halt' of the Sarabande. The second bar of the Gigue, again, has the same peculiarity, which can hardly have been purely accidental. Built on an arpeggio theme up and down, it employs, towards the end of the first part, a similar device to that so often noticed in the English suites, the bottom note of the arpeggio being left to sound as a bass, at whatever part of the bar it occurs; later on the device is used again, and chords are formed from the figure. The second section of the Gigue is built, as Spitta notices, on a new theme, which serves as a counterpoint to the first; can it be only a coincidence that the new theme starts with the three rising notes of the 'motto'?

No. 5 in G

The fifth Partita is sufficiently homogeneous in its style, and for the listener is remarkably easy to follow and to grasp. It is a different matter for the player, who seems to be occasionally required to forget all about technical rules, and to be full of resource in the way of overcoming various little problems that present themselves. It would be easy to rearrange the scale-passages in the brilliant Præambulum, if it were a question of only playing the notes; but the crossing of hands that is clearly indicated in the text puts meaning into the rapid semiquavers, and must not be shirked. This introductory movement gives the prevailing note of the whole suite, which in its approach to triviality is a strong contrast to its predecessor. In the Allemande the group of a dotted quaver with a semiquaver, against the semiquaver triplets which provide the greater part of the figuration, must of course be played as a quaver and a semiquaver. Here, and in the Sarabande, adherence to Türk's rule about the appoggiatura is of great value. The Courante, or Corrente, as it should strictly be called, has no great importance beyond its effectiveness as a piece of virtuoso music. The Sarabande, if any other interpretation than Türk's is adopted, will seem jerky, but if taken thus:



according to the strict tradition, it will be found melodious, even though the successions of thirds may be felt as a little cloying. In the Bischoff edition a compromise is suggested, whereby the grace-notes vary in length in a very arbitrary manner; there is absolutely no contemporary authority for such a proceeding, as the grace-notes must either be taken as real appoggiaturas, or quite short, as if they had a stroke through them. The 'Tempo di Minuetto', though marked as in 3/4 time, is virtually in 6/8 time almost throughout, after the manner of the cross-rhythms in the French courantes. The double stems to the first and fourth quavers seem to indicate that these notes are played with the right hand, the others with the left. On the harpsichord the two manuals would be used for this. A slight emphasis on the notes with double stems will represent the desired effect on the piano. The Passepied, though not comparable to the enchanting movement with the same title in the fifth English Suite, is sufficiently attractive. The Gigue presents the same anomaly as that of the preceding Partita, in that a new theme is started in the second part; but both are treated fugally, and in the middle of the second part the two themes are worked together with fine effect. The piece is really a double fugue.

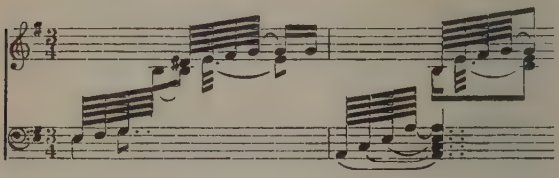
No. 6 in E minor

The 'Toccata' which opens this suite is merely called 'Prelude' in Anna Magdalena's book of 1725, which contains this and the third Partita. The *maestoso* introduction has the massive arpeggios which, as we have seen, were often used to form held chords; here the chord is not expressly directed to be held,

but the meaning of the movement almost requires it to be sustained, and on the pianoforte a sparing and careful use of the sustaining pedal may be recommended. The appoggiature must be given their full value. The movement leads without a break into a fugal section of great beauty. In both parts of the Toccata the chord of the diminished seventh is prominent, and the sequences of figures derived from this chord are a noteworthy feature of the beginning and end. Towards the middle the earlier version in Anna Magdalena's book has the parts exchanged for two or three bars. The Bischoff edition gives the variant in a foot-note, and records all the omissions and the rejected readings, a valuable help to the diligent student of Bach's methods. The Allemande is deeply expressive, and should be taken very deliberately. The conventional flourish at the end of each part connects the movement with the curious Gigue, where such flourishes seem to have no very appropriate place. The Courante—another 'corrente' by the way—is a study in syncopation, and the homely and attractive little phrase which appears in the groups of demisemiquavers in bars 29 and following tantalizes the hearer by its purely episodical character. Of the next movement (omitted in Anna Magdalena's book) Parry writes: 'The Aria, the added movement, is rather slight. Bach evidently put it in to ease the work of its excess of severity, and possibly to counterbalance the effect produced by the transformation of the Gigue from the simpler form in which it appears in Anna Magdalena's book, to the rather abstruse form here adopted, which is food for highly-developed wits rather than for ordinary humdrum minds.'[1] The Sarabande is splendidly

[1] Parry, *J. S. Bach*, p. 461.

elaborate, and the execution of the rapid notes, if they are to be given their full value, will tax the powers of even the most rhythmically perfect players. There are in the first chord, and elsewhere, the little transverse strokes which mean that the intermediate notes between the printed members of the chord, are to be lightly played and released at once, thus:



In the rather 'angular' Gavotte, since the figure of a dotted quaver and a semiquaver appears in the first bar, it seems doubtful whether the triplets which do not enter till the third complete bar should be allowed to modify the execution of the other figure. The strangely austere Gigue is not really more 'abstruse' in its final form than in the shape it wears in Anna Magdalena's book; there it is in notes of half the value of those in the ultimate form, but there is very little change in the actual music, except that the last note of the second bar (and parallel places) is a single quaver in the manuscript and, as engraved, is a minim with a shake above it. The differences between the two versions are carefully recorded in the Bischoff edition. No hearer could conceivably detect which style of notation was being followed by the player, and there is no actual increase in the austerity of the whole suite because of the alteration.

V. *Suites not included in the Three Collections*

Partita in B minor (Ouvertüre nach französischer Art)

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, iii; Peters, 2,747; Bischoff, iii.)

One of Bach's most important works for the harpsichord lies outside the sets that have been considered. It is known as the Partita in B minor, although that name does not appear on the original publication. It was engraved, very possibly by Bach himself, and issued, together with the 'Italian Concerto', as the second part of the *Clavierübung*. The original title runs:

> Zweiter Teil der Klavier-Übung bestehend in einem Concerto nach Italienischem Gusto und einer Overture nach französischer Art vor ein Claviercymbal mit zweien Manualen Denen Liebhabern zur Gemüths-Ergötzung verfertiget von Johann Sebastian Bach.

The name 'Overture' or 'Ouverture à la manière française' was sometimes applied to orchestral suites, and there is no doubt that it does not exclusively refer to the opening movement. Just as the word 'Sonata' is primarily applicable to the first movement of what we now call a sonata, so the word 'Overture' did not exclude the idea of a number of movements following the one to which the name was properly affixed. In this instance the number of 'Galanterien' is so great that they must be considered as an important part of the suite, not merely as additional attractions subordinate to the larger movements. Here, too,

there is no Allemande; the fact is explained by Spitta on the ground that this work was a kind of transcription or transference of the orchestral form to the clavier, and in the orchestral suites the Allemande has no place, being exclusively a keyboard piece.

English students of Bach have a very special privilege and opportunity in regard to this suite and the Italian Concerto; for in the British Museum are copies of the first impression (about 1735), and of the third, issued a few years later.[1] In the former there are annotations, stated on the best authority to be in Bach's own handwriting, which prove that this copy was used as a set of proof-sheets in preparing for the later issue. Careful examination of the two editions, and Bach's corrections, allows us to see the composer actually at work, revising and reconsidering various small points; and, like music-engravers of later times, Bach, or the engraver of the later issue, overlooked a good many of the alterations made in ink on the pages of the first. It would serve no useful purpose to go over all the corrections here, more particularly as I published a complete list of them in the Sammelbände of the *Internationale Musik-Gesellschaft*.[2] Furthermore, there exists in the Berlin Library a transcript of this Partita, in the handwriting of Bach himself, according to some authorities, or in that of Anna Magdalena, in the opinion of others. It is there in the key of C minor, and there has been some discussion, which need not concern us here, about the reason for this. There may have been some idea in the master's mind of following the example of Kuhnau, whose *Clavierübung* contains suites in the different keys arranged in alphabetical order. If we

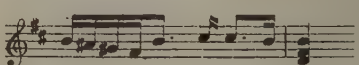
[1] The press-marks are K. 8. g. 7. and g. 548 b respectively.
[2] Vol. ii (1901), p. 643.

suppose that the present suite stood at first in C minor, and that Bach wished to complete his series of Partitas by representing the only one of the seven keys not illustrated in the set of six, we may guess that this is a reason for the transposition into B minor. But it never can have been irksome to Bach to use this, his favourite key, and the whole contention seems a little far-fetched.

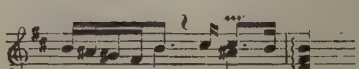
Those who desire to recover as nearly as may be the old conditions in which Bach's music was originally heard will hold this suite in special honour, for in all the best editions of this and the Italian Concerto we are allowed to see the exact way in which the two manuals of the harpsichord were employed. As a rule the words 'piano' and 'forte', printed in full, indicate that the directions are Bach's own, although here and there, as in the 'Echo' of this suite, the usual initial letters only are given in the Peters edition (Bischoff gives the words in full). As the nature of the harpsichord allowed of little gradation of tone but much contrast, it is advisable on the pianoforte to represent the contrast by judicious use of the soft pedal, notably in the Allegro movement of the Overture, the second Gavotte, the second Bourrée, and above all, in the Echo.

The 'Ouverture' starts with a splendidly impressive Adagio, in which great care in the matter of the relative note-values is necessary. The two issues differ mainly in respect of the ornaments, but there are a few more important readings that deserve notice. In the last bar of the fifth line of the first page (the laying-out of the page is the same in all three modern editions) Bach added a C sharp crotchet for the right hand at the beginning of the bar below the other notes, but either he or his engraver forgot to make

the addition. The fine fugal Allegro has characteristic staccato notes in its theme, and some of the staccato marks are left out of both the original issues, though written in by Bach. The 26th bar of the Allegro is a good example of the process, and of the way in which some only of the corrections were actually engraved. This and the first chord of the following bar stand thus in the first issue :



Bach corrected them as follows :

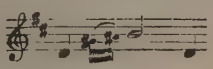


but the later issue has only this :

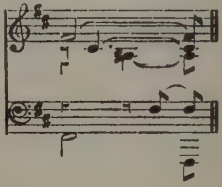
Bischoff gives the passage as corrected by Bach. Bar 52 (right hand) in the first version has no staccato marks ; the sewere added by Bach, but in the process of correction the leger line of the C sharp fell out, though the note kept its place below the stave, so that modern editors, even those of the *Bach-Gesellschaft*, have read the note as D. (Bischoff restores the C sharp rightly.) At bar 58 there is an interesting detail, illustrating some of the limitations of Bach's time. In the copy in C minor the first note of the bass is the lower G ; in the B minor version this stands, in all editions (including Bischoff), as the F sharp immediately

below the bass stave. It seems pretty certain that Bach's harpsichord had no note lower than the low G, so that the low note had to be sacrificed when the piece was set in B minor. This makes it probable that the C minor version is the earlier. Of course, as Bischoff says in a foot-note, it would be perfectly legitimate to play the low F sharp on the piano. The resumption of the Adagio and the repeat of the whole Allegro are curious peculiarities of this suite; to obey the injunction would be to make the whole very long.

The pages containing the next three movements (i. e. from the beginning of the Courante down to the end of the second Passepied) had to be re-engraved, and there are comparatively unimportant corrections made in them. As I have said, there is no Allemande in this suite, but the Courante is a noble specimen of the French type, in which, as elsewhere in the work, the observance of Türk's rule will add greatly to the flowing effect. The three repetitions of the bass arpeggio on different parts of the bar in the opening strain add very attractively to the rhythmic ambiguity that is so charming in these movements. About the two Gavottes there is little that need be said, for they are very well known and universally beloved. In the second section of No. 1, in the sixth complete bar, the Peters edition does not restore the naturals in the last group of semiquavers; Bischoff makes the restoration. The second Gavotte, meant to be played on the upper manual of the harpsichord, is built on the same theme as the first with a slight modification; in the seventh complete bar from the end the right hand should be thus:



as Bischoff reads it. In the pair of Gavottes the second is in the relative major; in the Passepieds the second is in the tonic major, and the contrast of tonalities is wonderfully effective in giving variety to the whole. At the end of the second there is the direction that the first should be repeated; a similar *da capo* should probably be understood in the Gavottes and Bourrées, but it does not seem to be definitely enjoined. The Sarabande, which is contemplative rather than deeply emotional, seems, as Spitta says, to look down from inspired heights at the artless gambols of the other pieces. The lovely pair of Bourrées are in the same key, as though, after the employment of two different major keys (in the Gavottes and Passepieds respectively), Bach had tried the experiment of remaining in the same key for the second Bourrée. The chord of F sharp at the end of the first part of the second Bourrée would undoubtedly have stood thus:



but for the limitations of Bach's harpsichord; this is the shape of the chord in the C minor version. The Gigue can hardly fail to strike the student as rather unnecessarily insistent on its recurring rhythm; a careful application of Türk's rule will modify this very greatly. The Gigue is followed by one of the most delightful movements in the whole of Bach, an

'Echo' in which the two manuals of the harpsichord are used in brilliant alternation. Here is no mechanical echo effect such as older composers had often employed, for the repetitions are seldom quite exact; they often fill up the gaps in an arpeggio with humorous intent, and present the melodic ideas in a new aspect. A careful use of the soft pedal is advisable to obtain the proper contrast.

Suite in A minor

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xxxvi; Peters, 4,518; Bischoff, ii.)

This Suite, like the Partita just discussed, allows us a glimpse of Bach in his workshop; for there are two versions of it in existence, and from internal evidence it is clear that the master made many alterations in the direction of greater simplicity, and many dealing with ornaments. What is obviously the earlier version exists in a manuscript formerly belonging to Rust, and now in the Royal Library at Berlin. Four of the French Suites, this work, and the suite in E flat, to be discussed later, appear in it, written by Bach's hand, and the title is 'Sex Suiten pur le Clavesin compossee par Mos. J. S. Bach'. The other version appears in Kellner's collection, and all the authorities are agreed that it represents the mature decision of the composer.

It is worth noticing that this and the next suite are without preludes in the 'Rust' autograph; and we may conjecture that there was an idea in Bach's mind of including these two among the French suites and conforming to the pattern there set by omitting the prelude to this one, which only appears in the Kellner copy. (It is given in Peters, but not in Bischoff.) It is a straightforward piece of no great

interest, the mood of which might be taken as rather pensive, if it were not marked 'fort gai'. In bar 15 the Peters edition ventures to alter the text, for the third and fourth quavers in the bass are B and C, not C and E flat, which have evidently been substituted so as to correspond with the following bar. The Allemande has much of the charm and dignity of those in the French Suites, and is quite worthy to stand beside them. In the fourth bar of the second part there is a difference of reading between the two versions which illustrates Bach's power of self-criticism; the two readings may be compared in the Peters edition, which gives that of Kellner, and that of Bischoff, which agrees with the Rust autograph. In bars 4 and 3 from the end, the tenor part disappears in the autograph, and the bass is slightly different. Here again the two modern editions may be profitably compared. The Courante is a very attractive specimen of the French type, reserving its cross-rhythms until the last bar of each section. The alterations here are in the direction of greater elaboration. For the Sarabande, which in the later version is expressive and serenely plaintive, we have in the earlier a 'Sarabande simple' followed by a 'Sarabande double'. The former with its almost persistent rhythmic figure is far less free and confident than its substitute in the later version, and the 'double' is a rather mechanical variation on the harmonic scheme of the 'simple' Sarabande, such as might figure in some chaconne. To make up for the omission of the 'Sarabande double', the later version contains a charming Minuet, beginning with two E's; one adorned with a mordent, the other with a turn. Care must be taken to bring out the difference, as the pair of notes with the same ornaments reappears twice over in the later part of

the movement. The Gigue, treated according to the orthodox plan of a fugal opening and an inversion in the second section, is very lively.

Suite in E flat

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xxxvi ; Peters, 4,518 ; Bischoff, ii.)

This Suite, like the preceding work, is closely connected with the French Suites (Bischoff gives them as an appendix to those suites). This one appears, not only in the Rust autograph, with the first four French Suites and the suite in A minor, but in an important copy in the Berlin Library, where it is made to serve as the sixth of the French Suites. In the 'Rust' autograph, and there only, we find the two Allemandes side by side; for the most part, the first is given alone, and in one manuscript the second is given without the first. It is very doubtful if both were ever intended to be played together, for in the autograph the second Allemande is evidently an addition made after the rest of the manuscript was complete, but still in the composer's handwriting. There can be little difference of opinion as to which of the two is the more characteristic and original, for while the first has the graceful and rather conventional movement of the French Suites, the second contains, from about bar 11 onwards, many of those chromatic progressions which have procured for Bach the adjective 'crabbed' in the vocabulary of some superficial musicians. In the bar referred to, the third group of semiquavers has that figure sometimes called a double appoggiatura, consisting of the semitone above and below the principal note (C flat, A natural, and B flat), and the supposed harshness of the pro-

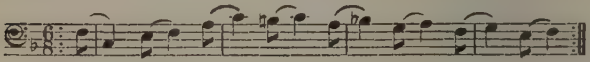
gression (which is imitated later on in the second section of the piece) has led Bischoff to substitute a C natural for the C flat, and the editors of the *Bach-Gesellschaft* to replace the note by a most conventional B flat. Happily the Peters edition gives the true reading. In the third bar of the second section of the first Allemande, the last note of the second group of semiquavers has also suffered the same indignity, for its last note appears as C in the *Bach-Gesellschaft*, against the weight of documentary evidence. The Courante is one of the finest specimens of the French type to be found in the whole range of the suites. The cross-rhythm of 3/2, which first appears in the third complete bar, is accompanied in the left-hand part by a persistent figure in 6/4 time, and the way the two rhythms are combined is delightful. The Sarabande is hardly worthy of the rest of the suite; it is rather sugary, and even if we adopt the profusion of ornaments given in the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and by Bischoff, it does not become very interesting. The single Bourrée, on the other hand, is full of fun, and the two Minuets which conclude the suite (for it has no Gigue) are the perfection of grace. In the first of these, the second section begins with a bass note D in the autograph, followed in Peters; the *Bach-Gesellschaft* and Bischoff prefer the easier B flat. In the second Minuet, which implies the upper manual of the harpsichord, there is a murmuring effect of great beauty in the bass part, which serves all the purpose of a 'drone' bass, while giving opportunity for changing harmonies.

Suite (Overture) in F

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xxxvi; Peters, 4,558; Bischoff, vii.)

This little composition, which Spitta, no doubt rightly, assigns to an early part of Bach's life, is without autograph authority, but is contained in several manuscripts, and is doubtless genuine. Like the Partita in B minor it is always called 'Overture', from the name strictly applied to its first movement. This is in the 'French' form with a *maestoso* opening in 'dotted' rhythm and a profusion of ornaments which are better left out on the pianoforte. The curious close on the dominant leads to an Allegro in 3/8 time with a fugal beginning, including four entries of the subject, though there are very seldom four parts in use. At bar 20 from the end the *Bach-Gesellschaft* somewhat arbitrarily conjectures an A in place of the second semiquaver against the reading of the authorities. The overture is followed by an 'Entrée' of very simple structure, in which the most remarkable thing is the use of the opening phrase at the end of each section as leading back to the repeat. The second section is inverted. The theme of the Minuet with its singularly charming three-bar rhythm is doubly effective after the exquisite Trio in the same key, the feature by which this suite is most affectionately remembered. While the right hand has a little recurring tune in four-bar rhythm, the left has a free figure of quavers, in which a legato touch seems to be required; notwithstanding some wide intervals, the use of the sustaining pedal is to be deprecated, though the soft pedal may be appropriately used throughout the trio. A jolly little Bourrée separates this from the tiny Gigue, the

naïveté of which reminds us of some of the early suites by Englishmen, which have little of finality about them, but just leave off. The slurs in the right-hand occur in the best of the transcripts, but I cannot help thinking that the phrasing conjectured in the Peters edition for the left-hand part is sadly wanting in point. (Bischoff slurs only two of the left-hand notes in this piece.) I venture to recommend the following, as more likely to bring out the meaning of the passage :



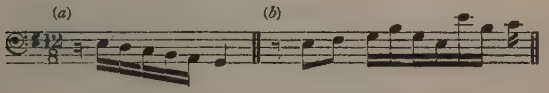
In the third bar of the second part the E in the bass of the Peters and Bischoff editions, and the C which appears in the same place in the *Bach-Gesellschaft*, are purely conjectural, as the manuscripts have a rest here.

Suite in E minor

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlv (i) ; Peters, 4,518 ; Bischoff, vii.)

Of this suite and those in A minor and E flat (see pp. 61–4) (all three seem to have been considered as 'possibilities' for inclusion among the French Suites) Spitta says, 'They are so admirable that only something of very superior beauty could have a right to displace them'. It has been conjectured that this one may have been intended for the lute ; for the first thing that strikes the reader is the low pitch in which it is set. The highest note attained in the whole suite is the C in the treble stave ; but, on the other hand, some of the chords in the left-hand part are unusually thick, and the whole

possesses a greater sonority than is found in the French Suites. Whether any lute was in existence upon which even the cleverest performer could execute certain of the passages in the work is extremely doubtful, and I should think it more likely that it was suggested by some defective keyed instrument, or one with a very limited compass. The Prelude begins with the word 'Passaggio', which seems to indicate a free and *ad libitum* rendering of the first flourish and possibly of the rapid scale passages that interrupt the chords in 'dotted' rhythm. The Presto in 3/8 time is a most attractive piece with the usual *fugato* opening. The Allemande has the device, mentioned before in connexion with the English Suites, of building up a chord by sustaining the notes of an arpeggio, and thus gaining sonority. The Courante has a lovely ambiguity of rhythm, rather than the direct contradiction of one rhythm by the other. In the fifth bar from the end the last note in the right-hand part is apparently meant to lead into the figure (marked 'scherz.' in Peters), and it seems better to read a single quaver B, with the *Bach-Gesellschaft*, than as it is given in the Peters and Bischoff editions. The Sarabande is eloquent and mature in style, and full of dignity. The values of the rapid notes in the second section differ in the various editions, and a certain amount of latitude in their execution is quite excusable. The Bourrée supplies the usual note of hilarity, and the Gigue has two little subjects



which are worked in most interesting guise; the first,

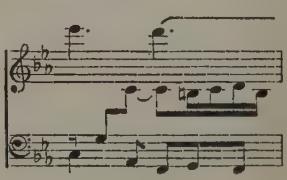
inverted and imitated, is the principal feature of the second section. The suite exists in two transcripts only, but the work itself is enough to tell us that only Bach could have written it.

VI. *Arrangements, Fragments, and Doubtful Works*

Suite in C minor

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlv (i).)

The genuineness of this suite is vouched for by C. P. E. Bach; it is quite certainly a transcription from an unknown violin piece. The 'Preludio' has florid passages for the right hand over a bass part that has very little interest, but the 'Fuga' it introduces has many points of value, such as the 'answer' at once in inversion; the *da capo* direction at the end is, of course, most unusual in a piece definitely named a fugue. The suite seems to exist in more than one version, but by some strange oversight the critical apparatus is omitted from that part of the volume of the great edition in which this work occurs. In one version there are passages which are obviously beyond the power of a single performer on the keyboard, like the following:



The Sarabande has the same resemblance to the theme of the cradle song in the Christmas Oratorio which was noticed in the Sarabande of the first English Suite. The Gigue and its accompanying 'Double' are clearly from violin pieces. As no composition for the violin, either with or without accompaniment, exists among the works of Bach, from which this could have been a transcription, it would be well worth some clever violinist's while to restore it to its original use, and the process would not involve much adaptation, except here and there in the matter of compass.

Fragment of suite in A

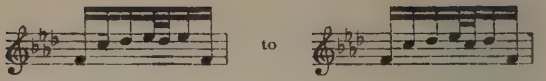
(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xxxvi; Peters, 6,383; Bischoff, vii.)

These three little movements appear, but not in Bach's autograph, in the *Clavierbüchlein* for W. F. Bach, so that there is very good documentary evidence for their genuineness, although they are not on the level we might expect. The conventional Allemande is followed by a Courante (Corrente) which is very pretty though rather obvious, while the Gigue has little but the opening theme to recommend it.

Fragment of suite in F minor

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xxxvi; Peters, 2,838; Bischoff, vii.)

The authenticity of this little suite rests on the authority of Kellner, but the internal evidence is very strong for its genuineness. The second movement is headed 'Sarabande en Rondeau', but it is the first movement, a Prelude, which is in rondo form; there are four repetitions of the principal theme, which is of charmingly expressive quality. In bar 25 the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition is no doubt right in correcting



to bring the passage into line with the following bars. The former passage occurs both in Peters and Bischoff, and it seems likely that the *Bach-Gesellschaft* volume appeared after Bischoff's edition was complete. The Sarabande is only in rondo form so far as it repeats the first section after the second. The Gigue has a rather persistent rhythm, and is of no great importance.

Suite in E

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlii.)

This suite is a literal transcription from the third Partita for unaccompanied violin, and it is curious as illustrating Bach's fondness for the subject-matter of the first movement, for he uses it in the orchestral introduction to the 'Rathswahl' cantata, 'Wir danken dir, Gott', and there exists also a transcription for organ. The distaste which some highly educated musicians feel for transcriptions is, of course, due to the shoals of operatic and other arrangements from which the public has suffered from the days of William Babell down to those of Liszt; but such things as this and the suite last mentioned are surely worthy of the student's attention, more particularly as the characteristic devices for the violin succeed so well on the keyboard. The joyful Prelude has the alternations of 'piano' and 'forte' which tell us that a harpsichord with two manuals was meant to be used, and of course the 'echo' effects which abound are far more effective on the harpsichord than on the

violin. The second movement is a most graceful 'loure', that form of movement which occurred in the fifth French Suite. The spirited 'Gavotte en Rondeau' is as hilarious as the Prelude, and the two Minuets, if less important than the rest of the work, lead to a merry Bourrée, the fun of which is as strongly marked as usual. The final movement is a Gigue of great charm. The process of transcription seems to have consisted almost entirely in lowering the pitch by an octave, and adding the various ornaments which were considered indispensable in harpsichord music. The drawback to the effect of the suite is that the basses, which very often repeat the lowest note of the passages for the right hand, are mostly uninteresting. The public performance of this suite would be quite excusable until such time as the average violinist shall awake to the beauty of Bach's unaccompanied works for his instrument, and in this suite there are plenty of points which would be useful to the pianist as technical studies.

Suite (Partie) in A

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlii.)

This composition exists in a manuscript in the Royal Library at Brussels. It begins with an Allemande of no special interest, and the showy 'Air pour les Trompettes' which follows it is one of those imitations of trumpet effects of which there are several among the English compositions of the time of Purcell. The Sarabande has full chords, and apart from some bold modulations in the last three bars, there is nothing to suggest Bach as the author. The Bourrée and Gigue are gay and pleasing, but there is none of Bach's imaginative power in either.

Allemande in C minor

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlii.)

Spitta speaks of an 'Allemande and Gigue' in this key, but the *Bach-Gesellschaft* edition has nothing to say of any Gigue associated with this single movement, which looks like an exercise in long stretches for the hand. The musical ideas are not very striking, and the piece often halts for no particular reason.

Gigue in F minor

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlii.)

It may be that this little piece was what Spitta was thinking of when he mentioned the 'pair' of pieces, as they are put together in a manuscript in the Berlin Library. It is a little more interesting than the Allemande.

Allemande and Courante in A

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlii.)

These little pieces are in a manuscript belonging to J. Hauser; they are without composer's name, and there seems very little reason in assigning them to Bach, for they are quite unworthy of him.

Allemande in A minor

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlii.)

This exists in a manuscript at Berlin, also without composer's name. It has a good deal more movement and interest than the other separate Allemandes referred to; its second part begins with an inversion of the theme, and it may very well be a genuine piece, rejected by the master in making up his suites.

Three Minuets

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xxxvi ; Peters, 4,558 ; Bischoff, vii.)

This is a charming little group of pieces, in G major, G minor, and G major respectively, which are clearly intended to be played in succession. The first appears by itself in Anna Magdalena's book of 1722. Five other minuets, unrelated to each other, are in her book of 1725.

Suite in B flat

(*Bach-Gesellschaft*, xlii ; Peters, 6,383.)

It remains to speak of a work of great beauty, contained in the collection of Kellner often mentioned before. The Praeludium, or 'Einleitung' as it is called in the Peters edition, does not seem very interesting at first, but the various imitations and the handling of the subject are eloquent of Bach's authorship. The first figure of the theme is also important in the Allemande, from the second bar onwards, and this, too, is quite characteristic, although the monotonous bass in the fourth bar of the second section is not of itself convincing. The Courante (Corrente) is pleasing, and has a little Coda attached to it after repetition of its second section. The Sarabande, a very simple movement, is nevertheless constructed on an original plan, the imitations of the theme being quite unusual. There is no Gigue, but the close of the suite consists of an 'Echo' which vies in charm and humour with that of the E minor Partita. Like that, it requires a double harpsichord to do it justice, and on the modern piano the soft

pedal should be used to mark the contrasts between the phrases marked *forte* and *piano*. As a rule the echoes are in three parts, the main themes in four, and it is interesting to see how the harmonies are arranged so as to avoid any thinness in the echo. In the second half of the piece the echo makes bold to go on a way of its own, and at the close two bars, instead of one, are taken for the echo to repeat. After this a series of full chords marked 'Adagio' and 'Tutti' bring the whole to a very effective end. The latter word must surely mean that all the stops of the harpsichord are to be used in combination. If the piece is not by Bach there must have been another composer of his time with as strong a sense of humour as his own. In any case the Echo is well worth the attention of pianists in the present day.

Every music-lover must be amazed at the wealth of ideas, the power of imagination, and the technical mastery that distinguish the suites as a whole; and when we remember that they represent only one branch, and that a comparatively small one, of Bach's work, we may well feel amazed at the power and extent of his supreme genius.

'THE MUSICAL PILGRIM'

Edited by Dr. Arthur Somervell

BEETHOVEN

I. The Pianoforte Sonatas

By A. FORBES MILNE
Director of Music in Berkhamsted School

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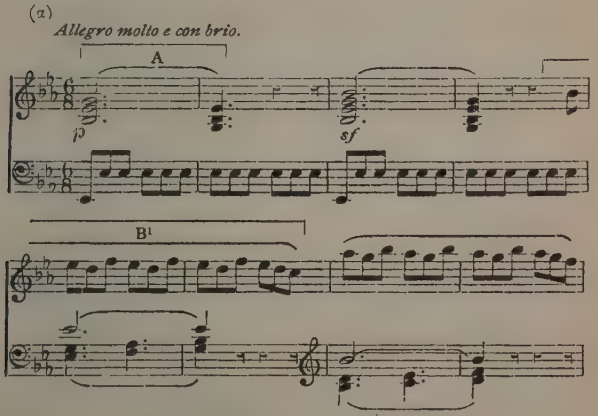
Sonata in E♭, Op. 7

This sonata, which was published in 1798, belongs to what is generally termed Beethoven's 'first period', when his work as a rule shows traces of the influence of Haydn and Mozart. Even in these early works, however, the personality of the man emerges, and we shall find in examining this sonata ample evidence of the fact, especially in the *Largo*. As Sir Henry Hadow puts it, speaking of the works of the first period generally, 'It is eighteenth-century music raised to a higher power.' [1]

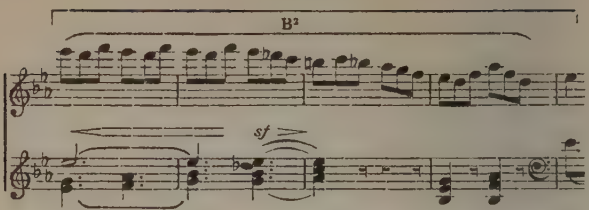
The sonata is planned on a large scale, in four movements.

1st Movement: *Allegro molto e con brio: E♭ major: Sonata Form.*

The principal theme extends to bar 17 and starts as follows:

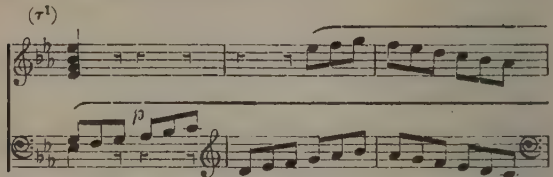


[1] *Oxford History of Music*, vol. v, p. 281.



Note its structure: A, a two-bar phrase, repeated: B¹, another two-bar phrase, well-contrasted, also repeated: B², the same idea as B¹ expanded to five bars, and continued by another five bars with the melody transferred to the left hand. The two five-bar phrases overlap, giving the impression of one long sweep from bar 9 to bar 17.

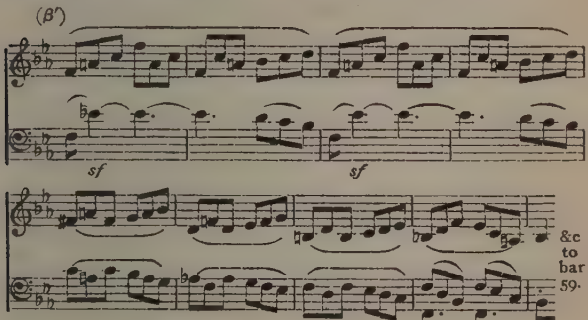
Overlapping the end of this first theme a transitional passage commences thus:



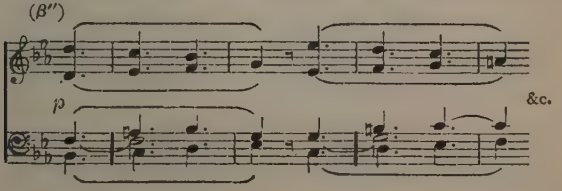
This is repeated with the parts reversed and leads to A, harmonized by a discord now (dom. 7th in A♭), and thundered out *ff*. The resolution is given in the following phrase, *pp*, a charming and characteristic effect:

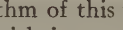
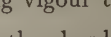
This process is repeated in B♭ minor, with a more poignant discord (dom. minor 9th). A third repetition of the A motive, this time harmonized by an augmented 6th chord, and marked *sf*, leads to a passage over an F in the bass (dom. pedal in B♭).

We have now reached the point when some new development seems imminent. The music has gradually swung away from the key of E♭ major in which it commenced, and the dominant pedal arouses a feeling of expectancy. In due course the second main theme, or, as frequently, group of themes, is presented. Beethoven, indeed, is particularly lavish of material in this movement. First we have the following, in which the restless quaver movement persists:

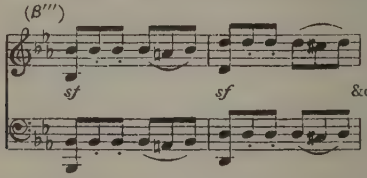


Then follows (β″) a welcome contrast, quiet and restful:

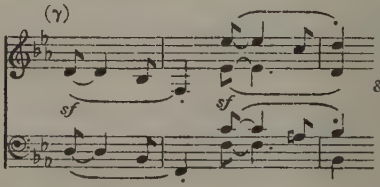


This is repeated in varied form, and for the next few bars the rhythm of this varied form  is driven home with increasing vigour till a climax is reached in the repetition, *ff*, of the chord  , which resolves unexpectedly on the $\frac{6}{4}$ chord of C major, one of Beethoven's characteristic surprises.

The rhythm of β'' now holds the field for a time, gentle and persuasive, only to be interrupted by an explosive unison passage in true Beethoven style (β''').



This is repeated in varied form, and leads to still another section consisting of broken chord harmonies in semiquavers over a pedal B♭, restless and stormy in character, a codetta (γ) with its syncopation enhancing that character.



We have now reached the end of the 'Exposition', as the first part of a movement in *Sonata Form* is called. It is necessary to grasp well the ideas which the composer has presented, as our understanding of

the sequel depends on that. It is for this reason, probably, that the section just concluded bears 'repeat' marks. Nowadays, however, a player as a rule disregards these marks.

Beethoven now begins to play off against one another the ideas which he has propounded, to show them in new situations. First he takes the opening motive (the A part of α) in its discordant form (dom. 7th in C minor), down in the lower part of the piano (cf. bars 25–6). A sudden *piano* introduces the scale passages of the transition (τ^1), passing from C minor through A♭ major to F minor, when the syncopated figure from the codetta (γ) holds its stormy course for sixteen bars, tossed from one register of the instrument to another. A climax is reached on the chord of D major, when a sudden *piano* passage (notice how fond Beethoven is of *sudden* pianos) carries out a beautiful modulation to A minor, in which key the A motive enters *pp*. This is followed by what is sometimes called an episode consisting of new material, which, however, seems to bear an affinity to bars 91–2, whilst the bass is plainly derived from the five-note quaver figure mentioned above, and the four-note rhythm of β''. However, Beethoven was no stickler for rules, and he does sometimes introduce new matter in the Development section of such a movement as this (e.g. in the *Eroica* Symphony). The passage in question is repeated in D minor. The dominant 7th chord in E♭ forms a link between the 'Development' and the 'Recapitulation', as the third part of a movement in sonata form is called.

The Recapitulation follows the usual course. We feel that the adventures of the themes are over, and every feature of the exposition is presented in succession without the changes of key which were a feature

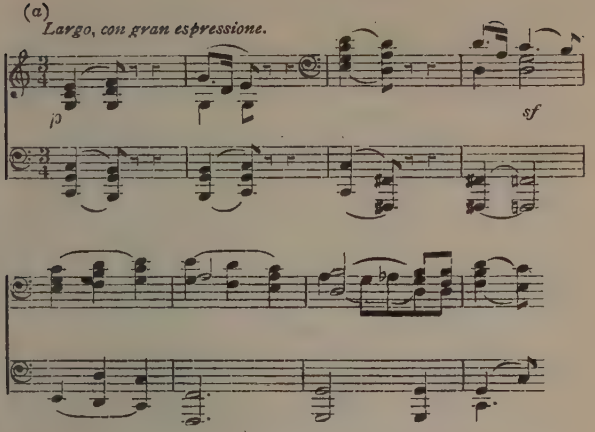
in the first part. But with Beethoven we can never be sure that adventures are over. At bar 307 begins an extended *Coda*, the concluding part of the movement, which in Beethoven's hands became increasingly more important. Here he sums up by reference (1) to the syncopated figure of the codetta (γ), (2) to the opening of the first theme (αA) in its 'stormy' aspect, (3) to the gentler 'second' subject (β''), (4) to the syncopated figure again, and (5) to αA once more, bringing the movement to an emphatic conclusion, strongly insisting on the tonic chord.

Note. Characteristics of Beethoven's personal style in this movement are (1) the sudden contrasts from *ff* to *pp*, e. g. bars 25–8 and following; (2) the prevalence of *sf* marks, and the 'explosive' utterance generally; (3) the big forcible climax in bars 79–81; (4) the development of a short rhythmic idea, e. g. the syncopated passage as treated in bars 153–69; (5) the unexpected resolution in bar 169; (6) the extended coda.

2nd Movement: *Largo, con gran espressione: C major: Ternary Form.*

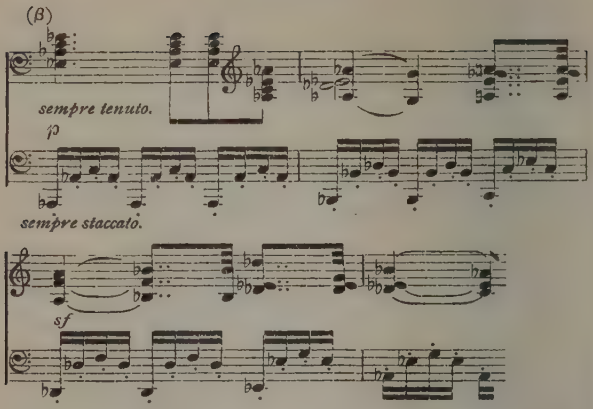
Here we have a typically Beethovenish mood, a seriousness and depth of feeling seldom, if ever, touched by Haydn or Mozart, and this in spite of some passages which proclaim their ancestry (e. g. bars 10 and following). The fact that much of the movement is derived from the melodic figures of the first two bars should be noted. That is Beethoven's way, over and over again; so full of possibilities are his themes.

The movement opens with an eight-bar sentence in C major (relatively a rare key for the slow movement of a sonata in E♭, but so it is with Beethoven: the 'rules' are his obedient servants).



This is followed by a two-bar phrase in G major, repeated in an ornamented form, and continued with altered harmony so as to lead back to the key of C. *α* is then apparently to be repeated *pp* (note the thinner harmony), but Beethoven goes off on a different tack. The second bar of *α* is 'developed', rapidly passing in sequence through the keys of D minor, F major, G minor, and A minor, till the dominant 7th of C is reached. The expected cadence in C, however, is not forthcoming. It is interrupted by a startling modification of the opening figure of *α*, *ff staccato*, in D minor. This is repeated, leading back to C, a *legato pp* bringing the cadence which was interrupted at bar 20. Thus the original eight bars have been transformed and extended to ten.

A link leads to the middle section of the ternary scheme, the 'theme of contrast' *β* in A♭ major (four bars).



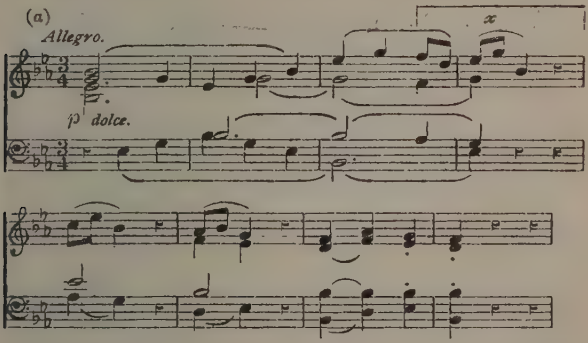
This is repeated, slightly modified in F minor, and again in D♭ major, leading to G major, the dom. 7th of D♭ (F♯=G♭) being quitted as an augmented 6th on the flat 2nd of G. A passage (which should be compared with a somewhat similar passage in the Andante of the Fifth Symphony, bars 26 et seq.) leads to an entry of α in the key of B♭, which proves a 'false alarm', the music switching off into a boisterous development of the second bar of α, ultimately settling down in dominant harmony of C major, in which key the real recapitulation of the first section of the movement at last appears. Note in this section the altered ornamentation, and the filling in of the rests with a little arabesque in bars 65, 66.

At bar 75 the coda begins, at first keeping to the theme of contrast (β) in the tenor register, with a graceful accompanying figure above. At bar 79 the rhythm of bar 2 is exploited above and below a dominant 'pedal' G. Bars 84–6 are derived from

bars 6–8. The movement ends with a richly harmonized version of *a* over a moving chromatic bass—Beethoven, as usual, having kept something in reserve till the end.

3rd Movement: *Allegro in E♭: Minuet and Trio Form.*

This movement takes the place of the Minuet and Trio of the earlier sonata writers. Both the major part and the minor are in Simple Ternary Form, with little or no melodic contrast within themselves, though they are well contrasted with each other. The major section of the movement begins as follows:



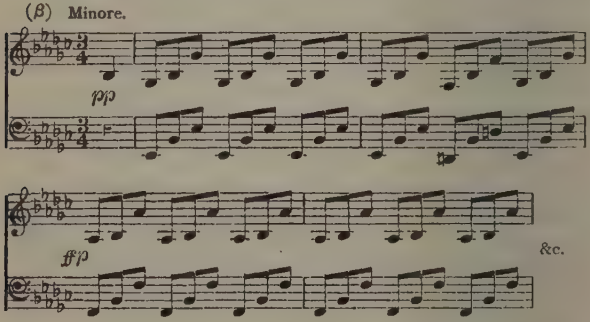
The first four bars are then repeated, this time ending with a full close in C minor. The cadence is repeated in B♭ major and is followed by a passage in dominant and tonic harmony in that key, developed from the bracketed figure in *a* (*x*). The first section ends in the key of B♭ at the double bar and is repeated, as is usual in such movements.

The middle section commences with a canonic

passage based on the first two bars of α in the key of F minor, and ends at bar 42. [N.B. Cf. bars 32 (last beat) and 33 with bars 7 and 8.]

The third section, beginning with bar 43, recapitulates the first. The first eight bars are announced as before (with a less final form of cadence at the fourth bar). Then the first four bars are given in the tonic minor, ending with an 'interrupted' cadence. The cadence chords are repeated in C♭ major twice. A third repetition initiates a passage of new material extending to bar 68, and ending with an augmented 6th chord on C♭. After a bar's rest we get the resolution in a passage reiterating the rhythm ♪♪ | ♩ ♩ in tonic and dominant harmony in E♭ till the point corresponding to bar 18 is reached, whence the ending is similar to that of the first section. A coda of nine bars of new matter enhances the feeling of finality.

The minor section (E♭ minor) provides the element of contrast. It opens as follows:



the first section closing at bar 16 in the dominant. The middle section is merely an expansion of this idea,

contrasted as to key, being for the first six bars in B♭ minor, then modulating back to E♭ minor, reaching the dominant of that key at bar 27. At bar 29 *β* returns, a modification taking place at bar 35 so as to avoid modulating.

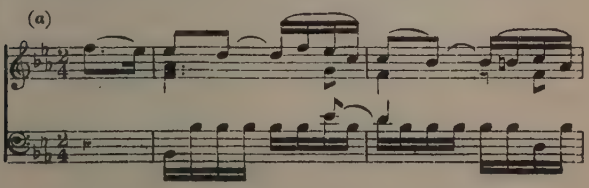
A coda begins at bar 44 ending with a chord of E♭ without the third at bar 51. A link of two notes, E♭ and G, establishes the major mode and the first section (*a*) is now repeated.

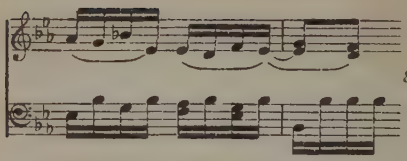
The whole movement is a good example of Beethoven's ability to 'stick to his text' without becoming a bore.

4th Movement: *Rondo: Poco allegretto e grazioso: Sonata-Rondo Form.*

The principal theme is a graceful, flowing melody in the Mozartian manner. Note, in passing, that rondo themes as a rule are more melodious, more definitely tunes, than the principal themes of first movements in sonata form. They are not constructed so much with a view to development as the latter are. Before Beethoven's time rondos were nearly always gay, sprightly tunes, but the moods of his rondos are not stereotyped in this way (e.g. compare the rondo in Op. 28 with that in Op. 90).

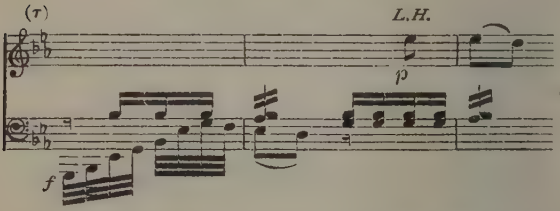
This particular theme, which is sixteen bars long and commences thus:

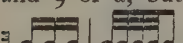




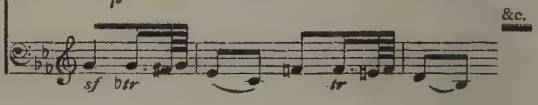
is a complete tune in ternary form, ending with a full close in the tonic key.

A passage beginning at bar 16 thus:

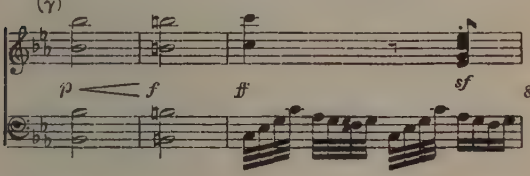


forms a transition between the principal and the second main theme. It is formed mostly on bars 8 and 9 of *a*, but from bar 24 onwards the rhythm  is exploited. In its course the transition passes through the keys of E♭ major, C minor, B♭ major, C minor again, and G minor, reaching ultimately B♭ major.

The second main theme starts in C minor, but modulates at once to B♭ major. It extends to bar 48, commencing thus at bar 36:



A link of two bars (48–9) leads to the return of *a*, this time in a shortened form, the last section being omitted. (Note the slight variation in bar 61.) We are thus left stranded on a B♭, with the feeling of that key in our minds. Beethoven at once plunges us through a bold B♮ (*forte*) into the key of C minor, in which the 'episode', as it is called, commences. The following quotation shows the beginning of the episode (*γ*), and the bold 'plunge' which precedes it :



The episode preserves throughout this character—restless movement, punctuated by sforzandos. It extends to bar 88 and forms a striking contrast to the suavity of the other themes.

Bars 88 to 93 form a link to the third entry of *a* (93 to 109), which is given in a slightly ornamented form.

Bars 109 to 129 form the transition to the *β* theme, altered so as to avoid modulating to the dominant. The system of keys this time is E♭ major, F minor, E♭ major again, F minor, C minor, E♭ major.

At bar 129 the *β* theme reappears, this time in F minor and E♭ major (cf. above). It continues its course till bar 141 is reached, when a link of two bars leads to the principal theme (*a*), this time varied and curtailed, ending, as before the episode, on a B♭ (bar 154).

Here the coda begins with a characteristically

Beethovenish touch. The *forte* B♭ is, as before, changed to B♮, but instead of leading to C minor, it introduces a much more surprising change. Quite gently the principal theme steals in in the remote key of E major. At bar 161 another thrill occurs, when the music is abruptly wrenched back to E♭, the one dominant succeeding the other, with dominant harmony of C minor as a link (B♮ being a note common both to B, D♯, F♯, and to B, D, F). The *ffp* marks enhance the effect. Such bold, unexpected strokes are characteristically Beethovenish.

The coda concerns itself with α till bar 166, when the episode (γ) is drawn upon. The movement ends tranquilly as it began.

Even in this early sonata one can feel the power of that great personality which was destined to become the greatest influence in music for many years.

Sonata in D major, Op. 28 ('Pastoral')

Composed in 1801, this sonata was named 'Pastoral' by the publisher Cranz. The title is not inappropriate either to the first movement, with its prolonged reiteration of a pedal D (such a pedal being a familiar convention in pastoral music), or to the last, with its jolly, open-air tune. One cannot say the same for all the fictitious titles that have been foisted, for sentimental or commercial reasons, on Beethoven's works.

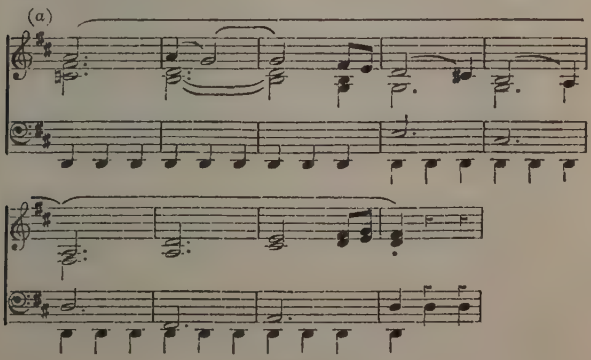
Though we have here a comparatively early example of what may be called Beethoven's second period, we shall find many signs of a distinct advance on the Op. 7 sonata towards a more mature and individual style. There is less evidence of the influence of his predecessors, and a freer treatment in the matter of

form. He appears at times to have calculated the expectations of his audience and then deliberately balked them, going on to convince, by the sureness of his technique, that his way is the right way. For example, in the first movement he leads us to expect a second subject in the key of A at bar 63, but gives us a theme in F♯ minor instead, keeps us in suspense for a while and ultimately reaches the key of A definitely at bar 91. In the development section again he produces a veritable *tour de force*, exploiting to the full the possibilities of his theme, fairly revelling in his strength.

The sonata is in four contrasted movements, of which the first is a particularly noble conception.

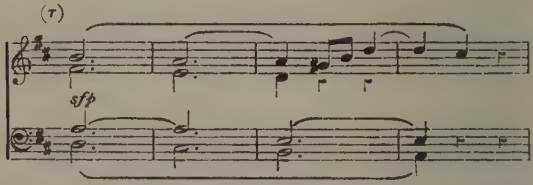
1st Movement: *Allegro: D major: Sonata Form.*

The movement opens, after three repeated D's in the bass, with a discord out of the key (cf. the opening of the 1st Symphony composed the previous year), and continues to bar 39. It starts with a nine-bar sentence, its two phrases overlapping in the 6th bar, thus:



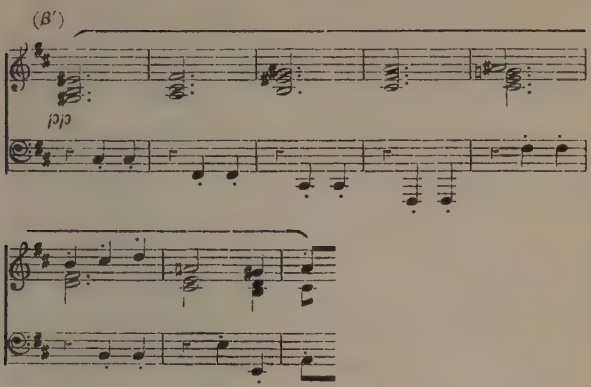
This is immediately repeated an octave higher. The continuation is similar in style and treatment, the repeated D, however, being transferred to the 'tenor' part. Bar 39 marks the end of this first thought with a full close in the tonic key. The mood is quiet and peaceful, such as one might quite well experience in the early morning in the country.

At bar 40 the music veers round to the key of A major, the transition being based on the following melodious idea,[1] which preserves the mood of calm already produced :

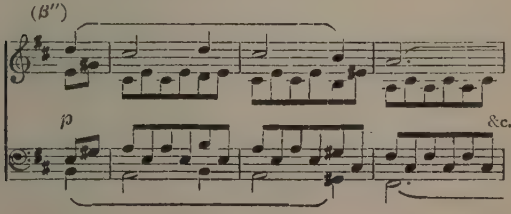


This is at once repeated in the key of A, and the whole eight bars are then given in a varied form, the quaver movement and the brighter key producing a feeling of mild exhilaration which is heightened by the repetition of the cadential bars (56, 57 and 58, 59) *piu forte*. At bar 60 the music dies down till a *piano* E is left—a note of expectancy. The first part of the second subject then begins, not in the key of A according to rule, but in F♯ minor (mediant), with the following rather wistful idea (eight bars) :

[1] Beethoven's transitions are generally interesting thematically. As a rule he avoids the conventional scale and chord passages characteristic of eighteenth-century composers.



Beethoven then starts as if he meant to repeat this, following his treatment of the first subject, but after the first four bars, he balks our expectations, and keeps us in suspense as to his ultimate intention until at bar 91 the new thought emerges, definitely in the key of A (dominant).[1]

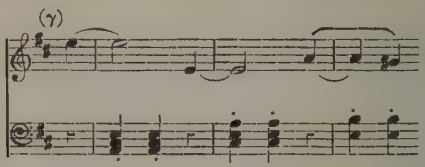


This is expanded till it reaches a climax at bar 103, when it is interrupted by an energetic protest repeated

[1] Some authorities consider this the second subject proper, and class bars 63–90 as part of the transition.

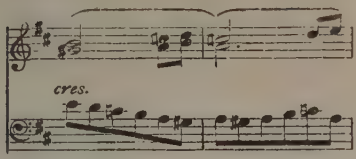
three times. At bar 109 the quieter mood again prevails (β''), only to be interrupted again at bar 126. A definite close in the key of A at bar 135 marks the conclusion of the 'second' group of themes in a return to the quiet mood.

A charming codetta follows, beginning thus:



Bars 159–63 form a link leading back to the repetition or on to the next section, as the case may be.

The development section starts off with a modulation to G major, in which key α appears in full, followed by a bar based rhythmically on bar 48 and harmonically on the dominant 7th on G. This leads to a statement of the first six bars of α in G minor. Overlapping this we have the last four bars of α in G minor over a quaver counterpoint in the bass. This second phrase of α is repeated in D minor (cf. subject and answer in a fugue), and then the whole passage (bars 183–90) is inverted (double counterpoint). At bar 199 a further 'reduction' of the first theme takes place, the last two bars (rhythmically 𝅗𝅥 ♪♪ | ♩) being treated in D minor, again in double counterpoint. The process is repeated in A minor. This rhythm (𝅗𝅥 ♪♪ | ♩) is then developed through A minor, E minor, and B minor, the excitement being heightened (1) by overlapping thus:



(2) by shortening and syncopation, when at bar 219 the motive is treated in two parts at once by inversion in the bass over an F♯ pedal thus :

Later (bar 229) the pedal F♯ is inverted, the rhythm 𝅗𝅥 ♪♪ | ♩ appearing beneath it.

The excitement thus produced ultimately subsides in a descending repetition of the chord of F♯ major (dominant of B). A pause occurs, leaving the listener in suspense as to what is coming next, and then very gently the delicate codetta theme (γ) steals in in B major. But it is the old 'γ' theme with a difference. It has somehow become wedded to the transition (τ, third bar). Beethoven is always charming us with such delightful touches. But he is not finished yet. Another pause follows and then a repetition of the same thing in B minor, getting ever softer and slower. Still another 𝄐 and a whispered repetition of the last two bars *adagio* in dominant 7th harmony in the key of D. One thinks immediately of that other

wonderful *adagio*, so unexpected, when the oboe utters its plaintive little cadenza in the recapitulation section of the 1st movement of the C minor Symphony. Such things are not in the 'rules' of the game, they are pure strokes of genius.

The dominant harmony thus reached arouses expectation of the return of the first subject (α), which is not disappointed.

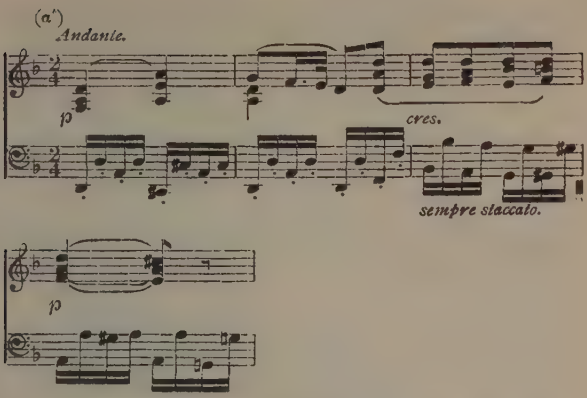
The whole of this development section is a good example of Beethoven's fondness for exploiting some short rhythmic fragment taken from the exposition, weaving it into a closely-knit texture, exhausting its possibilities as it were, a kind of treatment which, though found before his day (cf. Mozart's G minor Symphony, 1st movement, and Haydn's Symphony No. 2 in D, 1st movement), he made peculiarly his own.

The Recapitulation does not call for comment. The codetta from the exposition (γ) appears at bar 411, and, at bar 438, a coda is added founded on the first ten bars of the movement, the whole ending in the mood of morning calm with which it began.

2nd Movement: *Andante: D minor and major: Ternary Form.*

This Andante, though not strikingly original, was a great favourite with Beethoven himself.

The first part of the Ternary Scheme is itself in Ternary Form. It starts with a tender melody in D minor over a persistent staccato bass, a four-bar phrase ending with a half-close in D minor, answered by a four-bar phrase beginning in F major and ending in A minor (α').



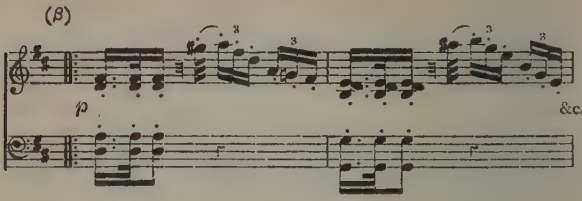
The middle section consists of eight bars on a dominant pedal A, beginning thus :

[Note the rhythmic development, becoming .]

The *a'* sentence is repeated and modified so as to end in D minor.

The contrasting episode is in D major, Binary

Form, with no internal contrast except as to key. It is livelier in mood, and a rhythmic rather than a melodic interest prevails.



On the return of α′ considerable embellishment of the melody takes place, the repetitions being consequently written out in full.

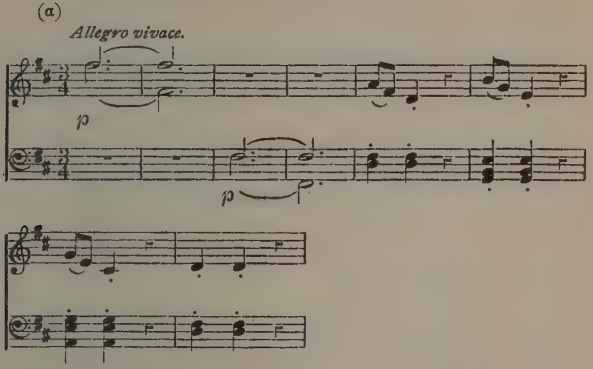
At bar 83 a coda, referring first to α′ and later (bar 89) to β, brings the movement to a close.

3rd Movement: *Scherzo and Trio: Allegro vivace: D major: Minuet and Trio Form.*

The Scherzo and Trio is the lineal descendant of the Minuet and Trio of the earlier symphonic writers. The minuet started as a somewhat slow, stately dance tune (e.g. the minuets of Handel). By Mozart's time the tempo was somewhat quicker, but the graceful character was generally preserved. Haydn, however, wrote minuets in a lighter vein, indulging his sense of fun to the full. From these the transition to the true Scherzo was easy. It should be noted, however, that Beethoven's scherzos are not always in the same mood. Humour there is, and even boisterousness, but we also find at times something mysterious, even sinister and 'uncanny'. A study of the scherzos in the Symphonies will make this clear. In structure too, as well as in character, Beethoven's scherzos vary

(e.g. the Scherzo in the Sonata in E♭, Op. 31, No. 3, is in sonata form and in 2-4 time). All of which shows that Beethoven cared naught for convention. If his ideas fitted the conventional forms, well and good; if not, then the forms had to give way.

The Scherzo starts as follows: [1]



This is repeated a third higher, ending in A major. The whole sixteen bars are next repeated more fully harmonized. The topsy-turviness of the accents produces an irresistibly humorous effect.

The middle section consists of development of *a*, the first two bars forming the basis. The whole of this section consists merely of dominant discords resolving on their tonics first in G major, then in A major and B minor, the last four bars leading to a pause on the dominant 7th in D major, which

[1] The time-signature 3-4, as so often in Beethoven's scherzos, does not convey the effect intended. 6-4, cutting out alternate bar-lines, gives the true swing of the rhythm. If read in this way, the phrases end with 'feminine' cadences.

naturally prompts the repetition of *a*. In this repetition there are modifications, however. The second phrase starts with fuller harmony than before and is marked *ff*; moreover, it is extended by repetition of the cadence chords. At the very end only do we get the tonic on the accent, the last *sf* D providing what the mind has been craving for all the time!

Trio: B minor: Binary Form.

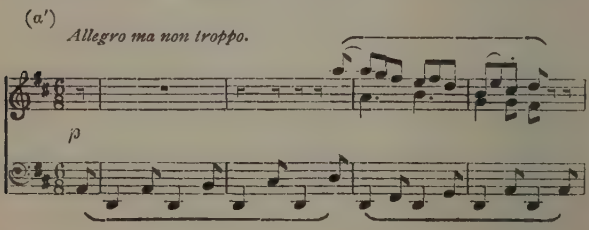
An eight-bar sentence of a smooth, flowing character forms the first part of the binary scheme, the second phrase modulating to D major. This is repeated.

The responsive second section starts in B minor and modulates to D major. This is repeated with slight modifications, after which the Scherzo is repeated.

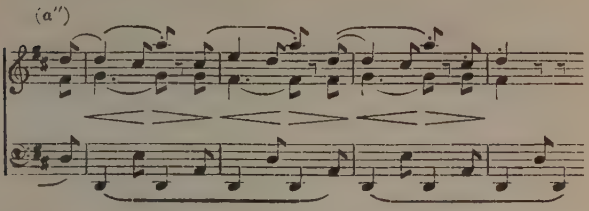
The Trio forms a striking contrast to the Scherzo, both in character and in the 'regularity' of its accents and rhythm.

4th Movement: *Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo: D major: Sonata-Rondo Form.*

This movement, probably more than any other, suggested the name 'Pastoral' which the publisher gave to the sonata. The principal theme has the characteristics of a jolly country dance, the 'pastoral' effect being enhanced by the pedal-point D on which the tune is constructed. It opens as follows:

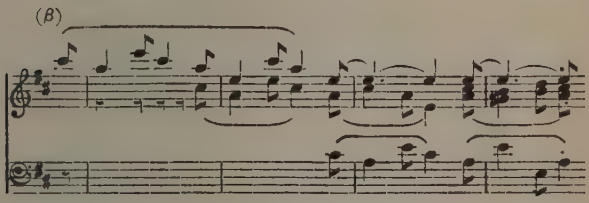


This is immediately repeated and continued thus :



This continuation is also repeated, but in a varied form, becoming . The principal theme ends on the first note of bar 16.

A transitional passage in broken chords (bars 16–28) effects a modulation to the key of the dominant (A major), leading to the second main theme at bar 28 (last quaver).

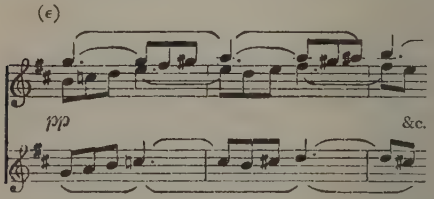


This is repeated in varied form and continued by repetition of the 'weak' cadential ending (bars 35, 36) four times, a strong 'masculine' cadence following at bars 42 and 43. This leads to the second part of the subject, which takes this vigorous form :

At bar 51 the first theme (α) makes its second appearance. Note the new figure superimposed on the bass previously unaccompanied (cf. bars 56, 57 with bars 5 and 6).

At bar 67 a passage founded on the bass of the principal theme leads ultimately to the beginning of the episode at bar 79, the first note of the latter overlapping the end of this transitional passage.

The episode, in which the main idea



is treated in imitation, centres round the key of G major, with incidental modulation, till bar 91 is reached, when it appears in G minor and modulates to D minor at bar 95. Here, while the bass preserves its original form, the upper parts make play with the rhythm which is the germ of the whole idea, the ascending form being freely imitated by inversion (descending). At bar 101 the latter portion of the

second theme (β'') appears in D minor, continuing till bar 113, the dominant harmony with which it ends forming a fitting preparation for the return of the principal theme (α), which on this occasion is again slightly varied (cf. bars 118 and 119 with bars 56 and 57 and bars 5 and 6).

The movement follows the normal course till bar 168 ushers in a coda formed for the most part on the bass of the principal theme. Note the dominant pedal (bars 177–92), and the reference to the broken chords of the transition between α'' and β' (cf. bars 187–92 with 16–28). From bar 192 (last quaver) to the end, the bass of the principal theme, with its tonic pedal, forms the basis of a brilliant climax worked up, at increased speed (*piu allegro*), from *p* to *ff*, two *ff* cadence chords bringing the movement to an abrupt end.

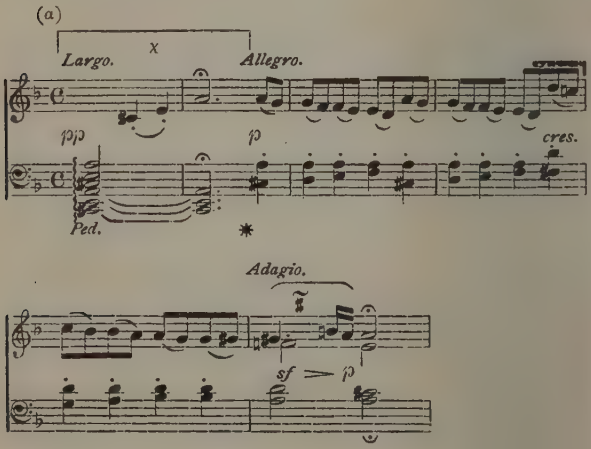
Sonata in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2

According to Czerny, Beethoven, after he had written the sonata we have just been studying (Op. 28), declared to a friend that he was not satisfied with the work he had so far produced. 'From to-day', he said, 'I will strike out a new road.' During the year 1802 he was engaged upon three sonatas for piano and violin (Op. 30), and three for piano alone (Op. 31). We may justly look for evidences of a change of style, then, in the work now before us. Nor shall we be disappointed, for the D minor Sonata is decidedly the most original of the three which constitute Op. 31. It consists of three movements, all of them, curiously enough, in Sonata Form, a fact which testifies to the elasticity of that form in Beethoven's hands, for the subject-matter of the three movements is strongly contrasted.

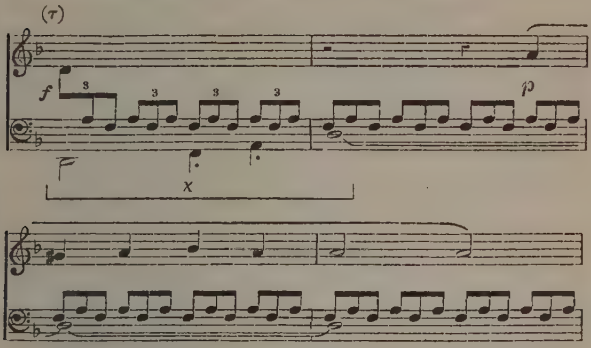
1st Movement: *Largo: Allegro: D minor: Sonata Form.*

One cannot listen to the first dozen bars of this movement without feeling that Beethoven has indeed struck out a new road. The alternation of *largo* and *allegro*, and the *agitato* nature of the latter create an effect which must have greatly astonished those who heard it for the first time. The first theme begins and ends with dominant harmony; then we find ourselves in F major at the second *largo*, only to be bustled out of that key in turn, no feeling of settlement in the key of D minor being experienced until the 13th bar, and no decided cadence in that key till bar 21. It is all highly dramatic: there is a feeling in the air that things are going to happen.

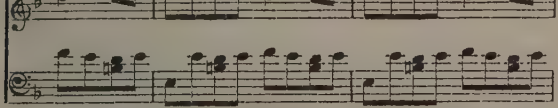
Here is the first theme, with its alternation of slow and quick tempo:



From bar 7 (transition) the music continues in this restless strain till bar 21 is reached, when the following dialogue between bass and treble occurs, and we feel comfortably settled in the key of D minor :

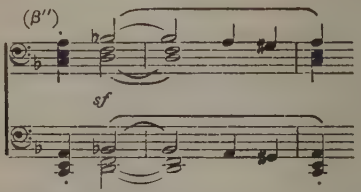


After another four bars, however, the bass motive 'χ', which is the motive of the opening *largo*, forms the basis of a modulatory passage leading to the dominant chord of A minor in bar 41. This curtailing of the rhythm from four bars, as in 7, to two bars increases the feeling of excitement, so that we are not surprised at the *agitato* nature of the next theme when it enters at the 41st bar (in A minor) : [1]



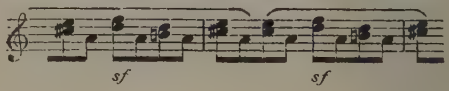
[1] The affinity between this and the *allegro* commencing in bar 2 will be observed.

This mood persists till bar 55 is reached, when the following angry little theme (β'') occurs and is developed at some length, ultimately merging in the coda, which consists of dominant and tonic harmony in the key of A minor (note the double counterpoint: cf. bars 75, 76 with bars 77, 78, &c.).



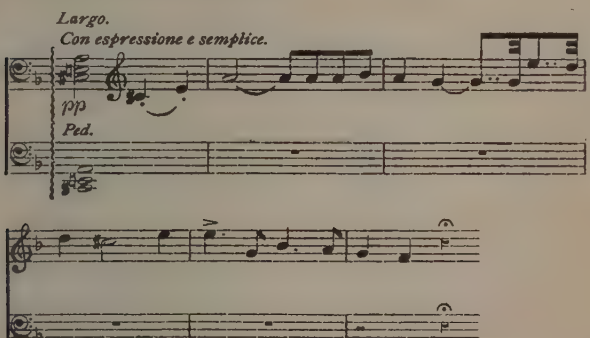
(Cf. the right-hand part of τ.)

Bars 87 (3rd beat) to 92 form a link leading to the repetition of the exposition, and, after this repetition, to the development section, which begins with the *largo* bars of α, first on the chord of D major (1st inversion), then on the chord of B with the minor 7th, and lastly on the chord of F♯ major (2nd inversion). Then follows, *allegro*, a development of the passage we have marked τ, beginning in the key of F♯ minor. This is treated in the same manner as before, being shorn of its last two bars after being twice stated in full. The 'χ' portion is rushed through the keys of F♯ minor, B minor, G major, C major, A major, and D minor. A dominant pedal in this last key is reached at bar 121, and the following bars (down to bar 133) are founded on the β'' theme in a contracted form, which, bringing the sforzandos closer together, makes that theme more petulant than ever. (Cf. this



with β''.) The following nine bars, based on the concluding portion of the exposition, lead to the beginning of the recapitulation.

This starts with the opening *largo* as before, but instead of the *allegro* following immediately, the *largo* is continued by what is practically a piece of operatic recitative without words. It is as if the music were trying to become articulate :



This device is not new. Others had used the vocal recitative style in instrumental music before,[1] but Beethoven's use of it here, interrupting the course of the principal theme at a point where every one must have expected an exact reproduction of the opening six bars of the sonata, is intensely dramatic. The most striking instance of the device occurs in the finale to the 9th Symphony (Choral), where the 'cellos and double-basses struggle, as it were, to express themselves vocally, their theme being ultimately

[1] e. g. in an early sonata for piano and violin by Biber (1681), in C. P. E. Bach's Sonata in F, Haydn's 'Le Midi' Symphony, &c.

taken up by the bass voice in a summons to the multitudes to join in the mighty song of joy.

Following on the passage quoted above, the *allegro* (bars 2, last beat, to 6) with its *adagio* cadence is introduced just as before. Another recitative passage follows the next *largo*, the two bars on the C major chord being continued by another 'solo' recitative passage in F minor. Once more Beethoven balks us. Instead of starting the transitional matter with the previous *allegro* as in the exposition, he introduces an entirely new passage, starting with four *pp* repetitions of the chord of C♯ major in the quick tempo, and following it by two bars of arpeggios in F♯ minor. He repeats the process, ending in G minor, and again ending in D minor, in which key the 'second' subject appears, the 'agitato' nature of which makes the rhapsodical passage we have been discussing strikingly appropriate. It is no doubt on account of these 'recitative' passages that some people call this work the 'Dramatic Sonata', though indeed there are many other dramatic moments in Beethoven's piano works. His themes have an individuality which often makes one feel that they act on their own initiative.

The rest of the movement calls for no comment, the continuation of the second subject and the coda taking the normal course.

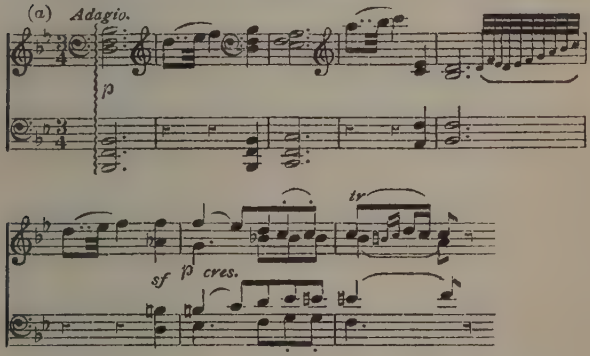
2nd Movement: *Adagio: B♭ major: Sonata Form (modified).*

This beautiful movement presents a feature which is more common in the works of Beethoven's 'first' period than in his later works. In spite of his determination to strike out a new road, we find here a theme which is quite Mozartian in its pure classical beauty. Moreover, it is accompanied in the usual

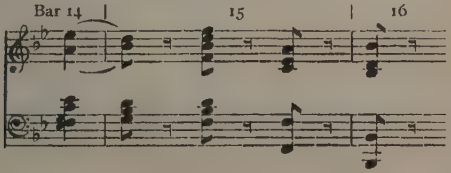
eighteenth-century manner, the whole passage being in striking contrast to the phraseology of the other main theme. The first subject is pure Beethoven, the second, beginning in bar 30, is a 'throw-back' to the earlier style.

The first subject occupies the first 17 bars, an eight-bar sentence being answered by a nine-bar one. The first bar is a 'preliminary' one, which is afterwards worked into the rhythmic scheme of the movement (cf. bar 9). The nine-bar rhythm, it should be noted, is produced by augmentation at the cadence.

The first sentence is as follows:

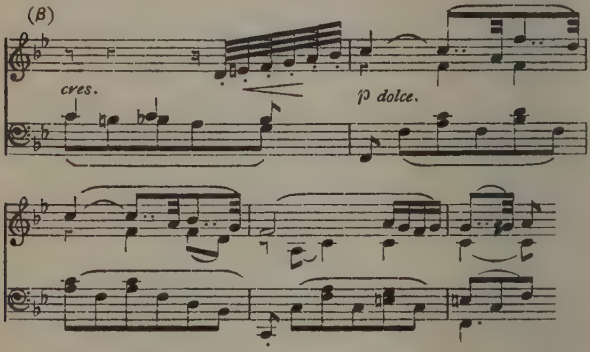


The augmentation referred to will be clear if we compare the following 'normal' ending with what Beethoven actually wrote:



A characteristic rhythmic figure introduces the transition, which starts in the tonic key and modulates to C major at bar 23, continuing with a dominant pedal, based on the rhythmic figure referred to, and used both below and above the thematic material, till bar 30 is reached.

Here the 'Mozartian' second subject begins thus in F major:



and continues as far as the first quaver in bar 38, its eight bars providing a nicely calculated and proportionate contrast to the principal theme of the movement.

There is no development section, a transitional passage, in which the characteristic figure is prominent in the bass, leading to the return of the first theme at bar 43. The second part of this is ornamented by an accompaniment of broken-chord figures in demisemiquavers, foreshadowed in the 'prefix' to the first chord of bar 51.

At bar 72 the second subject returns in the tonic

key, whilst a coda commencing in bar 80 brings the movement to a conclusion. The latter refers (1) to the material of the second transition (bars 38–42), and (2) to the first subject (bars 89–98), concluding with a quiet passage on a tonic pedal whose connexion with previously used material is obvious (e.g. cf. bars 100–1 with bars 87–8).

3rd Movement: *Allegretto: D minor: Sonata Form.*

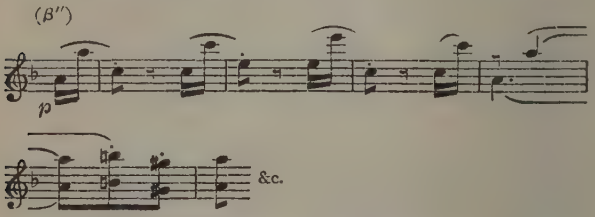
There is a story that the rhythm of this movement 'was suggested by the beat of a galloping horse, and this, if true, illustrates the manner in which Beethoven allowed his music to be affected by external impressions. Like all the greatest musicians he seldom attempted any direct representation of scenes or sounds in nature . . . he prefers . . . to represent not the external scene but its psychological analogue or counterpart: the measure is not that of a gallop, but it calls up the same impression of haste and urgency.' [1]

The first theme (bars 1–31) is built on a rhythmic figure which is very persistent throughout the movement. It commences as follows, in four-bar rhythm:

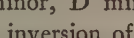
[1] Sir Henry Hadow in *Oxford History of Music*, vol. v, pp. 291, 292.

The transition to the second theme, which occupies bars 31 to 43 (1st beat), keeps up the restless mood, whilst the cross-rhythm (2-8 in effect) of the first part of the second theme itself (*β′*) intensifies the feeling of 'haste and urgency':

β′ is repeated in broken octave form and extended to sixteen bars, the second part of the second theme continuing as follows:



From bar 91 a link leads to the development section which commences in bar 95. It confines itself entirely to exploiting the rhythm of the first subject, the sequence of keys being G minor, A minor, D minor (N.B. the tonic key is generally avoided in this section

of a movement in sonata form), C minor, B♭ minor, E♭ minor, B♭ minor, A♭ major, B♭ minor (note the tonic pedal), A minor, D minor, G minor, and D minor. Note the inversion of  at bar 118 and elsewhere. At bar 169 note the combination of the rhythm of the first subject with the cross-rhythm of *β′*.

The recapitulation begins at bar 214, the first subject being curtailed. Avoiding a close in the tonic, it passes imperceptibly into the transition, which reaches the key of B♭ major at bar 235 and, continuing through B♭ minor, F minor, C minor, and G minor, ultimately reaches the dominant of D minor at bar 271. The second theme then enters and is given in full in the tonic key. At bar 319 a link leads to the Coda, which continues the rhythmic figure of the opening, a dominant pedal (bars 335–50) introducing a full statement of the first subject (rather unusually), the *sf* A's on the third beat giving it an entirely new character. The concluding section is strikingly effective on account of the unexpected *piano* in bar 385 after the *ff*.

It will be noticed that the whole of this long movement is developed from two rhythmic ideas, the four-note figure of *α* and the two-quaver figure of *β′*.

Sonata in F minor, Op. 57 ('Appassionata')

This sonata, which was written probably in 1804 and published in 1807, is undoubtedly one of the greatest works in all pianoforte literature. It is the product of a mature mind: the work not merely of a man who has mastered the technique of his art,

so that he uses his tools with perfect confidence and unerring skill, but of a man who has faced life fearlessly, shirking no experience, however bitter. And indeed Beethoven, with all his capacity for joy, with all his sense of humour and love of a practical joke, had his full share of suffering—physical suffering due to his deafness and its attendant ills, mental suffering due to his ill fortune in love, to his own morbidly sensitive temperament, and to worries of various kinds. Independent almost to a fault, boorish at times and ill-tempered, yet craving to be understood and loved, he lived only in his music. His inner life was one of ceaseless conflict. 'I will grapple with Fate,' he says; 'it shall never drag me down.'

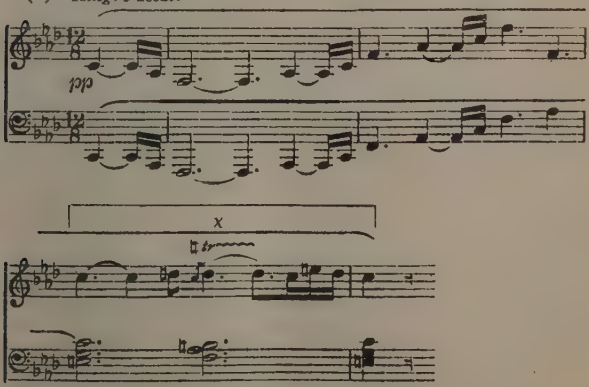
While it is difficult, for the most part, to connect Beethoven's music directly with the events of his life, it is easy to feel in his works the force of his personality, with its strange mixture of tenderness and volcanic impetuosity. Music to him meant more than the writing of a well-turned phrase, it was a vehicle for the expression of emotion, a means of recording human experience; and his sureness of technique, his thorough mastery of his material, now made it possible for him to express himself convincingly. There is no fumbling, every note is vital, even the smallest detail becoming significant as the work proceeds. He never degenerates into incoherent rhapsody, but preserves the balance between expression and design. His 'form' is perfectly clear, but form to him was no fetish to be worshipped for its own sake; it was merely a synonym for coherence.

This sonata is a perfect example of Beethoven's 'second' style. The title 'Appassionata' was given by the publisher; it is quite a fitting one, though it might quite as justifiably be given to others of the

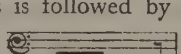
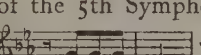
sonatas. There are only three movements, but everything is on a grand scale—expansive, elemental. The Theme with Variations gives some relief to the emotional tension, but this is rudely disturbed by the entry of the final movement without a break, as if its turbulent passion could contain itself no longer.

1st Movement: *Allegro assai: F minor: Sonata Form.*

The sonata opens with a four-bar phrase modulating to the dominant at the cadence. It is an example of a strikingly impressive effect produced by simple means—a mere common chord arpeggio, treble and bass two octaves apart, followed by a simply harmonized appendage—an old device (cf. Haydn's Quartet in C, Op. 54, No. 2, and Mozart's G major Quartet), but arresting in its daring simplicity. One feels immediately in the grip of something elemental:



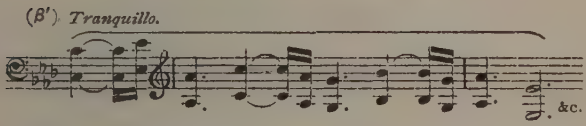
This phrase is immediately repeated a semitone higher. Beethoven, it should be noted, indulges in a freedom of key within his 'first subjects' which his predecessors never allowed themselves. This particular device of repeating the initial idea a step higher or lower may be found also in the Waldstein Sonata (1st movement), in the first movement of Op. 31, No. 1, and elsewhere.

At bar 9 the cadential part of the theme (χ) alone occurs, wresting the music back to the dominant of the key. This is followed by an ominous figure *pp* in the bass (γ)  (cf. the famous 'fate' motive of the 5th Symphony, begun about the year 1805, ). The 'χ' portion of α again occurs with the melody a third higher, only to be interrupted again by 'γ', three times repeated, the third repetition *f* initiating a headlong rush of semiquavers based on the dominant 7th chord, a crashing chord of the submediant (inverted), and a pause on the dominant chord *p* bringing the statement of the first theme to a close. One cannot but feel in listening to this how far music has travelled from the purely classical ideal. This theme is charged with a dynamic emotional force which grips us in spite of ourselves. It is a living thing, almost articulate!

After the pause referred to, Beethoven makes as if to repeat the α theme *pp*, but after the third note an explosive *ff* passage (based on the tonic chord) rudely interrupts, the syncopation expressing frantic agitation. 'Not that strain again,' it seems to say. The α theme, however, persists, and gets a bit farther,

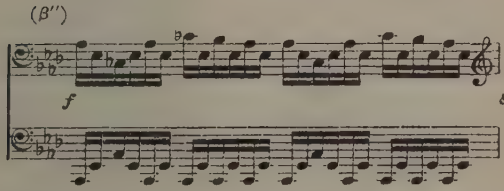
when another interruption occurs, and so on it goes, having its say, in spite of interruptions, till at bar 24 a throbbing quaver figure (the 'γ' motive, no doubt) makes itself felt as an accompaniment to plaintive, spasmodic cries, which gradually die down, producing a feeling almost of despair, till at bar 36 comfort comes in the shape of a beautiful, noble tune in A♭ major which provides a perfect counterpart to what has gone before (β').

(Second group of themes, No. 1)



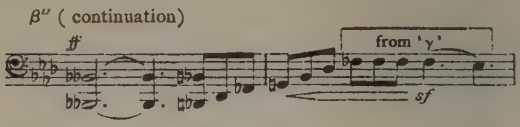
The respite, however, is not for long. At bar 51 a new turbulent theme in A♭ minor (β'') bursts in, and the whole atmosphere is changed.

(Second group of themes, No. 2)

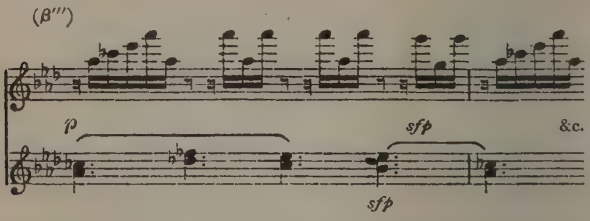


This is repeated in F♭ major, and continued by a passionate passage, accompanied by an agitated semiquaver *tremolando*, in which the motive marked 'γ' above makes its presence felt. [Note that harmonically this passage is based on the dominant minor

9th chord (diminished 7th), which is much in evidence in this sonata.]

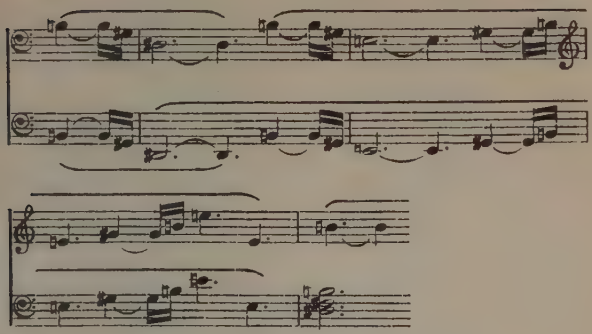


A repetition of the whole four bars leads to the last section of this group of themes, which obviously is derived from the last two beats of bar 54.



The music ultimately settles down on the chord of A♭ minor *pp*. A double-bar marks the close of the 'exposition', but Beethoven discards the conventional repetition. Impassioned utterance such as we have in this sonata could not endure it. Continuity is an absolute necessity of the case. But note how Beethoven, while discarding the 'repeat', proceeds in the 'development' section to deal quite fully with the first theme, the transitional passage, and the β′ theme, in this order, ending with a reference to the 'γ' motive. Thus while 'developing' his themes he at the same time recapitulates the salient features of the exposition in their normal order!

At bar 65 the development section begins with the following:



which is really the previous chord enharmonically changed (A♭ minor chord becoming G♯ minor). This provides a link to the statement of *a* in the key of E major, which is discussed in that key till bar 79, when the first part of *a* is rushed through a series of keys, accompanied by stormy semiquavers, first E minor, then C minor and A♭ major until the dominant minor 9th chord in the key of D♭ is reached, which prepares the way for a transitional passage, based on bars 24–34, in the key of D♭. As in the exposition, this passage leads to the entry of *β′*, this time in D♭ major. It is treated freely as to interval and melodic curve, and, becoming more and more animated, passes through B♭ minor, G♭ major, B minor, and C major until, at bar 123, the chord of the dominant minor 9th in F is reached. A torrent of rushing arpeggios on this chord leads at bar 130 to the '*γ*' motive, which is driven home by repetition till the *fp* in bar 134, after which the outburst subsides and nothing remains but the throbbing quavers of the bass (cf. bars 24 et seq.). Then, still to the accompaniment of these ominous quavers, the first theme

steals in *pp* (α). The atmosphere is different from that which pervades the opening of the sonata, the constant muttering of the quavers (which, by the way, form a dominant pedal) producing an eerieness not felt before.

At bar 151 a surprise occurs, the transitional passage beginning with α in F *major* instead of F minor, a ray of light amidst the surrounding gloom, which, however, does not last long. The plaintive passages, referred to above as occurring at bar 24, are again heard at bar 164, this time in the key of F minor. These lead to the first of the second group of themes (β′) which enters in bar 174 in F major, with the same calm beauty and strength as before. The other themes (β″ and β‴) occur in due course, the 'recapitulation' being quite normal.

At bar 204, overlapping the end of the recapitulation, an extensive coda begins. It lasts for 58 bars and is nearly as long as the exposition. This part of a sonata movement became increasingly important with Beethoven. Instead of a few chords emphasizing the key of the movement he gives us, as it were, an epilogue, and sometimes even 'an entire act'.[1]

In the present instance Beethoven evidently felt that the usual proceeding in a movement of this kind failed to suffice for what he had to say. His subject is not exhausted, hence the long, developed coda, in which he lets himself go with a freedom which he eschewed in the 'development' section.

There is no interruption of the flow of the music, for the coda continues the style of the conclusion of the exposition, the first theme α entering unobtrusively in the bass (note the first two notes augmented to crotchets). It is then subjected to a process which

[1] See *Oxford History of Music*, vol. v, pp. 287–9.

is characteristic of the composer, and which produces a feeling of increasing intensity. First we have the complete rhythm thus :

(1)

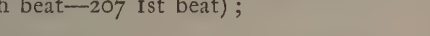
(bars 204–6, 3rd beat) ;

then (2)

(206 4th beat—207 1st beat) ;

then (3) (overlapping 2)

(207–8 1st beat ; and finally (4) (overlapping B)



(209–10 1st beat).

Bar 210 introduces the β' theme in D♭ major, which is subjected to similar compression, thus keeping up the feeling of excitement. At bar 218 a broken-chord figure is developed (cf. bars 125 et seq.), passing through B♭ minor, F minor, and B♭ minor again till a dominant pedal in F minor is reached (bar 231) which continues till bar 235, when the 'γ' motive enters and is repeated several times with diminishing force and slackening pace. At bar 238 it is given out in 4-part harmony, *pp* and *adagio*, with a pause on the last chord, after which the tempo is increased, and four fierce chords in the same rhythm usher in the β' theme freely treated in F minor and B♭ minor, subjected to compression as before, and worked up to a climax culminating in the chord of F minor in bar 249, when a three-note figure derived from 'γ' is hammered out with tremendous power till a sudden *piano* at bar 257 introduces a figure in the rhythm

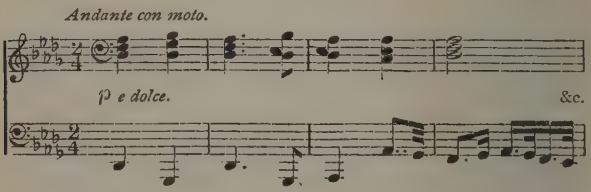
of the first three notes of *a* (♩ ♬ ♩.) which is carried up to the top of the pianoforte and down again to the foot, getting gradually softer till the low F is reached, the accompanying tremolando dying away in the merest whisper (*ppp*).

Notes. (1) The rhythmic affinity between the themes marked α' and β' will be noticed by the student. The one seems the inevitable counterpart to the other.

(2) Analogous to the melodic compression mentioned above is the harmonic compression in bars 218–26, where at first one harmony lasts for two bars (218–21), then there are two chords to a bar (222–3), and, finally, four chords to each bar (224–6).

2nd Movement: *Andante con moto: D♭ major: Variation Form.*

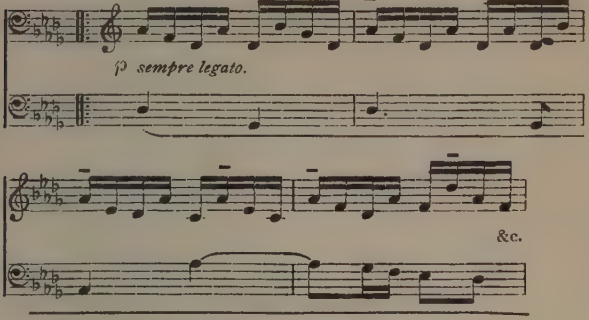
This movement consists of a Theme with Variations of a quiet beauty which affords a welcome relief from the stormy passion of the first movement. The theme is in simple binary form, consisting of two eight-bar sentences, both ending in the tonic key. It is of slight melodic interest, and its diatonic harmony is relieved by but one touch of colour, the augmented sixth chord in bar 6.



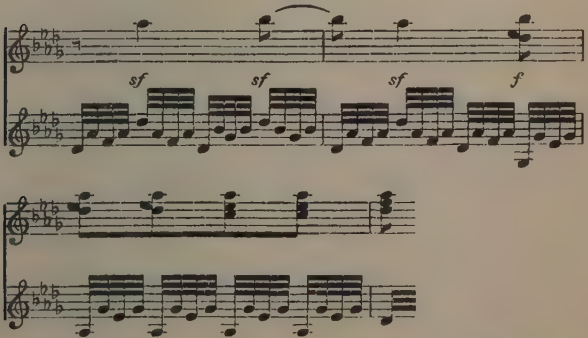
The first variation preserves the theme quite clearly in the right-hand part, though the chords are detached, the bass being syncopated throughout.

The second variation has an embellishment of the

theme in broken chords in the right hand, the bass being altered at bars 36 and 40.



In the third variation the melodic ideas are given to the right and left hand alternately, the whole being accompanied by a figure in demisemiquavers. The original melody is freely treated, the first two bars of each phrase in syncopation thus :



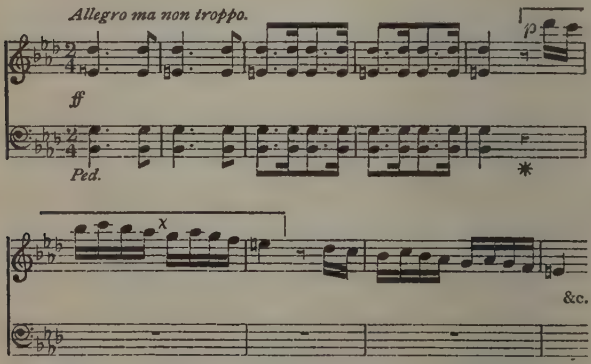
This variation leads to a restatement of the theme

with modifications (note the moving bass in bars 83, 84 and 87, 88, and the change of register in bars 92 and 94).

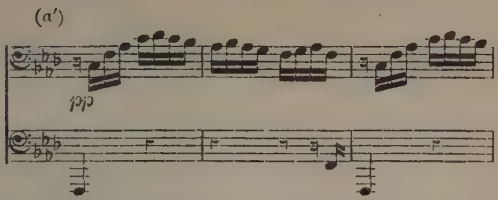
At bar 96 an interrupted cadence occurs. Instead of the expected tonic chord we have a diminished 7th (dom. minor 9th in F) played *pp*. This is repeated an octave higher *ff*, shattering the calm of the *Andante*, and is followed without a break by five bars of the same chord *ff*, *Allegro ma non troppo*, which begin the introduction to the

3rd Movement: *Allegro ma non troppo: F minor: Sonata Form.*

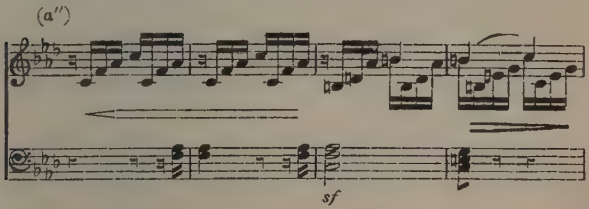
This introduction continues till bar 20, the figure in semiquavers ('χ') hinting at the principal theme which is to come.



The figure marked 'χ' works up to a climax (*ff*) and then dies down, the real 'first subject' of the movement beginning softly in bar 20 thus:



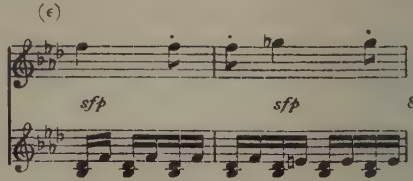
This idea persists till bar 36, when a second thought (*a''*), closely related to it, continues the whirl of sound till a full close in F minor at bar 64 marks the end of the first subject.



The transition from the first subject to the second contains no new material; it is based on *a'* harmonized. At bar 76 the second subject in C minor emerges, commencing thus:

The expansion of this idea carries the music on in an unbroken swing to bar 96, when the last section of the

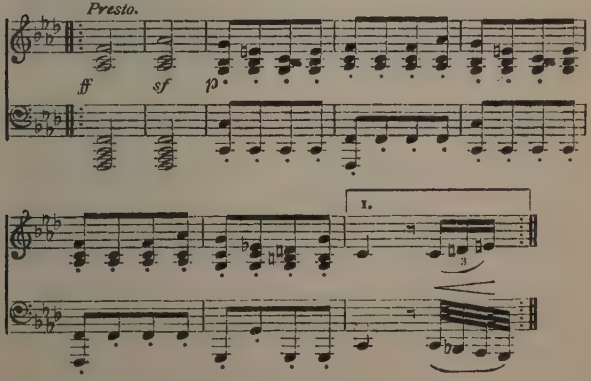
exposition is reached. This is based on the *a'* idea treated in imitation and rounded off by a motive in repeated chords whose rhythm ♪| ♩♩♩♩ | ♪ recalls the '*γ*' motive of the first movement (♩♩♩ ♩). A diminished 7th chord instead of the expected tonic chord of F minor marks the climax of this passage at bar 112, after which the music dies down to a subdued muttering in the bass. The development of the main theme *a'* now begins *pp* in B♭ minor. This continues to bar 143, having worked up from *pp* to *f* without ever abating the rush of the semiquavers. At bar 143 there enters a new idea, still in B♭ minor, which continues and heightens the restless mood, the syncopation and tremolando increasing the agitation :



This episode (ε) continues till at bar 158 *a'* is again predominant, treated in imitation, first in F minor, then in G♭ major, then in B♭ minor, producing a climax of great animation. At bar 168 a dominant pedal in F minor commences and lasts till bar 175. The expected cadence is avoided, the chord of G♭ major (Neapolitan 6th) coming in with a crash in bar 176 and being continued in arpeggio for three bars. After a bar's silence the dominant 7th in F minor is similarly treated, followed by another bar's silence, after which the diminished 7th chord forms the basis of a passage in which the tension is gradually

slackened until, at bar 206, the dominant 7th, repeated five times *calmando* over a pedal C, brings us to the 'recapitulation', the first theme (*a'*) entering *pp*. At bar 220 a counter-melody in the right-hand part is played off against (*a'*) in the left thus:

The recapitulation proceeds on its normal course, with the usual insistence on the tonic key, till at bar 307 a double bar and 'repeat' sign enjoins the unusual procedure of repeating the whole of the music from the beginning of the development section. Probably it is in view of this that at bar 308 we have an entirely new theme of great incisiveness ushering in the Coda (*Presto*).



This eight-bar sentence is repeated and followed by the same idea beginning in A♭ major and modulating back to F minor, and extended to ten bars. This likewise is repeated, after which the principal theme (a') is developed to a truly overwhelming climax, the sonata ending with six bars of the common chord of F minor in arpeggios and three crashing sforzandos.

Sonata in E major, Op. 109

The works of Beethoven's third period are admittedly hard nuts for the average listener to crack. Structurally they present several new characteristics, notably in Op. 111, where, after several less successful efforts (e.g. in Op. 106 and Op. 110), he succeeds in fusing the two forms—sonata and fugue. There is, moreover, even where no fugue is present, a much more free polyphonic style, in which the constituent parts or 'voices' attain the maximum of individuality. His melodies too have a spirituality which even the finest of his previous ones fail to attain. The direction 'mit innigster Empfindung' which he prefixes to the theme of the second movement of this sonata and to others of his themes during this period, seems to point to the fact that he is striving after a sublime expression of the very quintessence of human emotion, purged of all its grosser aspects.

This music was written at a time when Beethoven, having tasted the sweets of success and acclamation, was plunged into the most trying and difficult circumstances of his whole life. His brother's death, his worries with the widow and his nephew, his complete deafness and chronic ill-health, and his actual poverty, all combined to put him to the severest trial. But he still continued to produce works. Driven in upon

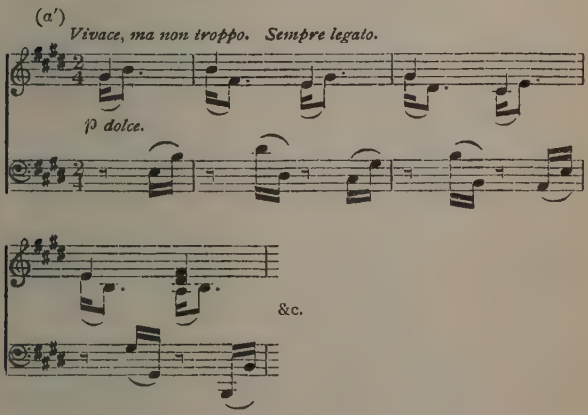
himself, more and more, however, he looked no longer without for inspiration, but turned his thoughts inwards in contemplation of his own soul. As Vincent d'Indy puts it, this was the ' période de reflexion '.

We have chosen this particular sonata because it contains the wonderful *Andante molto cantabile*, which exemplifies the spirituality we have mentioned, and also, in the variations, the polyphonic texture which is also a characteristic of the third period.

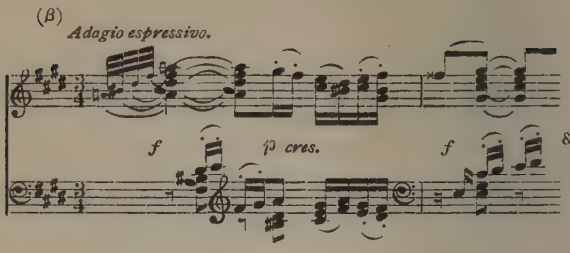
1st Movement : *Vivace ma non troppo : E major.*

This movement consists of a theme, enunciated in the first eight bars, which alternates with a second expressive *Adagio*, somewhat in the manner of a rondo. The *Adagio* is in the style of a free improvisation.

The *Vivace* theme starts as follows :



This is continued in the same style till at the 9th bar, overlapping the *Vivace* theme, the *Adagio* enters thus :



The a' theme reappears at bar 15 beginning in B major. At bar 21 a new melody is added above its rhythm thus :

Beginning in G♯ minor, this works up to a climax, passing through B major, D♯ minor, F♯ major, and so reaching a dominant pedal in B major at bar 33, and an inverted dominant pedal in E major at bar 42. At bar 48 the a theme enters in the tonic.

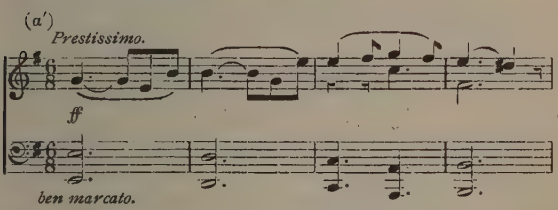
This is interrupted by the *Adagio* again at bar 58 in F♯ minor, modulating at bar 61 to C major. This is continued as before with heightened intensity. A diminuendo leads to a recurrence of the a' idea at bar 66. A passage in crotchet chords, bearing some affinity to (a''), leads to a coda on a tonic pedal based upon the rhythm of a'.

Formal analysis is really to little purpose in a movement of this kind, which depends for its effect upon a realization of the same kind of abandon as characterizes a good improvisation.

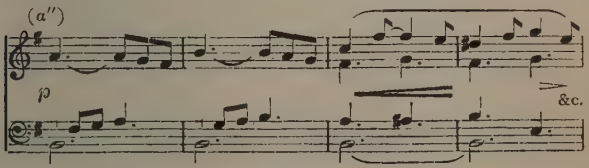
2nd Movement : *Prestissimo in E minor : Sonata Form.*

This delightful movement is a good example of the closely-knit organic style of Beethoven's later period. There is little contrast between the main themes, the whole being largely developed from the rhythms contained in the first four bars. Its key-system, however, conforms to that of the 'First-Movement' or 'Sonata-Form' type. The polyphonic nature of the music will be obvious to all.

The first subject starts thus :



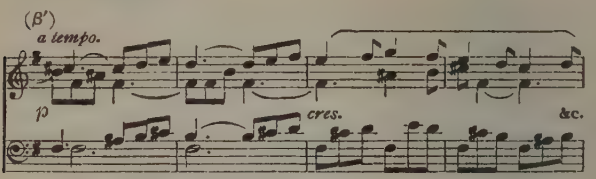
At bar 9, over a long dominant pedal, it is continued in this fashion :



till bar 24 is reached, where there is a full close in the tonic.

A transitional passage, based on the rhythm of *a'*, bars 3 and 4, first in bare octaves and then harmonized, leads to the 'second subject' in B minor (on a dominant pedal). This, it will be observed, preserves much

the same rhythm as *a'* and *a''*. It overlaps the end of the transition.



The second subject may be said to end at the first beat of bar 66 (overlapping the beginning of the development section). Note the freedom of modulation within the second subject. (B minor, F♯ minor, E minor, D minor, C major, B minor; the keys of F♯ minor, E minor, and D minor never being really established, however.) The double counterpart in bars 57–65 will be noted.

The development section starts at bar 66 with a reference to the *a'* theme. At bar 70, over a pedal B, the bass of *a'* is treated in canon in two parts. The key of C major is reached in bar 83. Note how the three-crotchet figure (bars 81 and 82 1st beat) is developed and how the bass of *a'* is transferred to the top part and harmonized (bars 89 et seq.).

The recapitulation starts in bar 105. There are some differences in treatment in this section: e.g. the *a'* theme is transferred to the bass in bars 112–20, while the original bass is inverted and transformed in rhythm. The syncopated version of its first two notes was foreshadowed in bars 83 and 84 (♩. ♩. ♩). The rest of the movement proceeds normally, a short coda founded on the bass of bars 158–61 bringing it to an abrupt end.

In its economy of material and its concentration, this movement recalls the methods of the 'sonatas' and suites of the early eighteenth century.

3rd Movement: *Theme with Variations: E major.*

This wonderful tune may be taken as typical of that sublimity of expression which is characteristic of Beethoven's melodies in those last years of his life, when his soul was 'closed to the noise and turmoil of the outside world'[1]. With a full sense of the meaning of the word we do not hesitate to speak of its *ineffable* beauty.

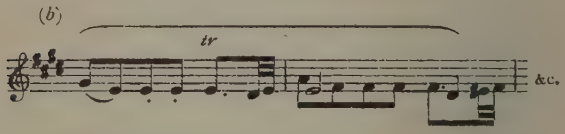
The theme is in two parts, the first eight bars ending in the dominant, the second returning to the tonic. Each part is repeated. Note the wonderful tenderness of the final cadence. The whole theme is daring in its simplicity.

[1] Vincent d'Indy, *Beethoven.*

Variation I. This consists of a new melody of exquisitely beautiful 'curve' on a simpler, more diatonic, harmonic basis which serves as a foil to the melody, much in the same way as the simple harmonies of many of Mozart's melodies do.

Variation II. Here we have a 'double' variation, each repetition of the theme receiving different treatment. The first eight bars give the theme, easily traceable, in broken chord form.

The next eight bars start off with the following figure based on the opening of the theme, treated in 'imitation' on a dominant pedal:

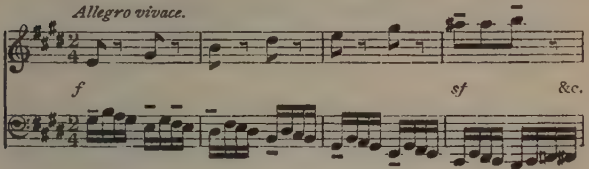


but after four bars the variation takes this form:

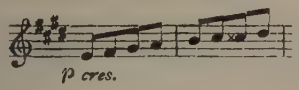
the (*a*) form returning at bar 17, when the second half

of the theme is treated in the same manner as the first, all three features *a*, *b*, and *c* appearing in turn.

Variation III. Again we have a double variation, the first eight bars starting thus with great animation, the bass hinting at the melodic outline of the theme :

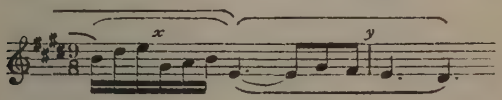


This is inverted (double counterpoint). Beginning at bar 9, the whole is repeated, the quaver rests being filled in with ' passing-notes ' thus :



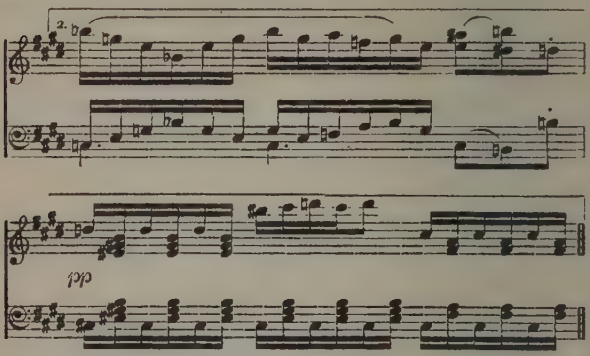
The second part of the theme is similarly treated.

Variation IV. The time is again changed, this time to 9-8, and the tempo of the theme resumed. The whole variation is based on an embellished form of the theme :



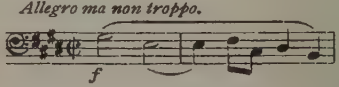
the *x* figure playing an important part throughout, frequently treated ' imitatively '. The '*y*' portion of the above is likewise treated in imitation. The combination of *x* and *y*, treated in double counterpoint, will be noted. After the repetition of the first

part, contrapuntal treatment gives place to harmonic till bar 13 is reached; thus:



At bar 13 the *x* figure reappears, treated imitatively, and persists till the last bar. It will be noted that the repetitions are not written out in full, this not being a double variation.

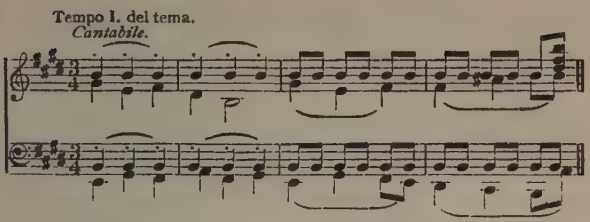
Variation V. The whole is a closely-knit development of the following, treated contrapuntally, in a free fugal style:



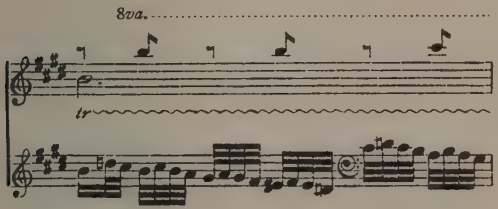
The connexion with the opening bars of the theme is obvious. The 'imitations' are accompanied by an independent part, sometimes in quavers.

This variation leads without a break into

Variation VI. In this the theme is more in evidence, at first in a simple form under an 'inverted' dominant pedal thus:



and then in an embellished form in 9-8 time. On the return of the 3-4 time the first four bars of the above are given in quavers, the 'pedal' notes taking the form of trills. These trills persist while the melody is given in triplets. At bar 17 a dominant-pedal shake supports a series of rushing demisemiquavers in broken chords which continue till bar 24, when a scale passage in demisemiquavers introduces the following, in which the melody (second part of the theme) is heard in detached quavers against the rushing semiquaver figure and an inverted dominant pedal:



It is not till this point is reached that the significance of bars 17–24 becomes clear.

Note the prolongation of the dominant 7th chord from bar 32 to bar 35. The resolution ultimately comes in bar 36, when the original theme appears overlapping the end of the variation. The theme is

now stated quite simply as at first, without repeats, the whole movement ending in the atmosphere of spiritual calm with which it began.

Note. M. Vincent d'Indy has pointed out that Beethoven in his last period seems to have been drawn towards the earlier forms of the *Suite*, the *Fugue*, and the *Chorale with variations*, and he says that it is his 'new use of these traditional elements which gives the works of this period their consummate and incontestable originality'.[1]

[1] Vincent d'Indy, *Beethoven.*

'THE MUSICAL PILGRIM'

Edited by Dr. Arthur Somervell

THE MASTER-SINGERS OF WAGNER

By CYRIL WINN

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Pre-Wagnerian Opera

In order to value Wagner's achievements in the sphere of opera, it is essential to show, however briefly, the course of the music-drama in history. It is generally agreed that the end of the sixteenth century marks its inception, at a time when it was the fashion to set plays to music of a very simple nature, which confined itself to a kind of musical recitative accompanied by occasional chords. But for the folk of those days the play or poem was of the greater importance, and the music was regarded as being only a very subsidiary companion to it. With its rapid development, however, it was not likely that the art of music would for long be content to play so secondary a part. Thus composers began to design tunes and melodies for the libretto, with the result that the play began to be divided more and more into definite sections. This innovation, of course, created a demand for singers to perform the numbers thus arranged, and a new branch of the art sprang into being; for solo singers began to merit the appreciation of the general public, and the composer had to recognize the fact, even at the expense of the author of the play. It was not long, therefore, before music-drama had entirely departed from its original plan. It was not the drama that now mattered, but the music, and music-drama degenerated into a form of entertainment strung together by a series of solos, and devised to exhibit the 'pyrotechnics' of individual singers. The

public enjoyed these exhibitions to the full, caring not a whit for the drama, but rapturously imbibing every trill and flourish as it came. Thus the opera, as this music-drama began to be called, became a mere convention, and composers after learning a few preliminary tricks were able to manufacture arias without number, each to suit his own favourite virtuoso. The great exception to these, of course, was Handel, who, though casting his operas in the fashionable mould—he would never have got a hearing otherwise—possessed genius enough to adorn them with music of unparalleled beauty. It was not, however, until the very nadir of operatic composition had been reached that the reaction came, and the voices of those who demanded a change could be heard; they insisted that the play should be regarded as being at least as important as the music. So during the latter half of the eighteenth century composers like Gluck (1714–87) were willing to take their cue from the poet, and to effect a more equal communion of the two arts when applied to the theatre. But progress in this respect was necessarily slow; partly because of the technical difficulties involved, the art of music not being sufficiently developed to meet the composer's demands; and partly because Italy, with its world-wide reputation for producing great singers and its predominant influence in the field of music-drama, seriously retarded the progress of opera elsewhere; it was not until the salutary influences of German art began to make themselves felt, that the dead-weight of individual virtuosity was removed. So by the end of the eighteeenth century the romantic spirit had found its way into the music of the opera, and with men like Mozart and Weber, and in a lesser degree Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann, true

poetic feeling was combined with musical genius. The result of this happy union soon had effect on opera, which approaches to perfection as a form in the works of Wagner.

We know from his own writings that he was a great student and ardent admirer of Beethoven, for in one of his picturesque passages he asserts that 'it seemed feasible to realize my idea by leading the whole rich stream into which German music had swollen under Beethoven into the channel of the musical drama'. He did not, therefore, build up his work exclusively on the foundation of opera, but, by utilizing all the resources of his predecessors, in whatever branch of the art they were pre-eminent, was able to advance the progress of opera to an extent hitherto unrealized. A comparison between the *Dido and Aeneas* of Purcell and *The Master-Singers* of Wagner is more than sufficient comment on the incomparable achievement of this master of master-singers.

The Music

This opera was maturing in Wagner's mind during the same epoch of misery that produced *Tristan*, yet it is so instinct with the atmosphere of freedom from care that one would be led to suppose it to be the product of the happiest period of his life. But, as a matter of fact, when things were going most hardly with him, he wrote his brightest and most human work. When he adumbrated the story in 1845, he intended it as the comic epilogue to *Tannhäuser*, somewhat after the style of the hilarious Satyr-play which at Athens usually followed a tragedy; but this idea was ultimately abandoned, and the opera,

completed in 1867, was produced as a self-contained whole.

It is well known that Wagner's views on the construction of opera were strongly opposed to those current in his day. Among other reforms, he was strongly in favour of the idea of so arranging his works that they formed one continuous whole, and were not dissected into separate numbers, as was the vogue in the operas of his day. It is curious, therefore, that in this very opera, in which he is satirizing current convention, he should have approximated more closely to the conventional style than he has done in any other of his operatic works. The *Master-Singers*, in fact, is replete with songs that can be detached from the context and sung quite independently of the whole, and so, curiously enough, reflects the lines of the old conservative form.

Another of his great contributions to the theory of operatic production was the short theme-producing picture or musical characterization commonly called the 'leitmotiv'[1], over thirty of which are to be found in the *Master-Singers* alone. Each 'motive', as it comes, implies some thought or suggestion of the person or thing for which it stands, and from these the score is really constructed. But it is remarkable that, though they appear, vanish, and reappear so frequently, there is no sense of conscious effort about their use, nor any break in the continuity of the flow; a glance at the score will soon show how spontaneously they come and go. From the literary point of view, however, it is often very bewildering on a first reading of any of his operas to find some motive appearing early in the score, when the character or idea which it is meant to represent does not appear for some time

[1] 'motive'.

afterwards. Not until the work has been carefully studied, therefore, can the full significance of each motif and all its appearances be clearly recognized. It must not be thought, however, that the conception of the 'leitmotiv' was peculiar to or even realized for the first time in Wagner's operas. On the contrary, it is part of the fundamental principle of symphonic music, and has its roots in the very earliest experiments in sonata form. For what is the opera but the symphony, and the 'leitmotiv' but the subject 'writ large'? The ideal which music, in company with the other arts, strives to realize is that of unity in variety, and symphonic writers sought to realize this by the use of two subjects which should form the unifying element on which their respective developments should be based. Originally these were of a very simple character and the structure of such compositions was correspondingly simple. But as the art of music developed, the subject also developed, both horizontally in interest, and vertically in harmonic outline, and, in consequence, greater attention was paid to the *musical* character of the work. Later, however, it was discovered that musical subjects were capable of expressing abstract ideas, or even certain personages and situations, and when it became apparent that music could achieve this quite naturally, the true basis of dramatic music was reached. Now it stands to reason that in the course of a story or drama the same ideas, personages, and situations will recur, and on each occasion the subject or figure which is intended to represent them will also recur at the same time. In this way both the unity and variety of the old symphonic form are preserved.

The psychological explanation of the subject so employed is simple; for the story or event must have

impressed the composer so deeply that he has expressed it in an outflow of music, quite as adequately as the author has been able to do in words, each salient feature of the plot having its musical counterpart. It is in this connexion that the name 'subject' gives place to that of 'leitmotiv' or leading theme, the use of which, from the theoretical point of view at any rate, seems inevitable wherever the music is happily wedded to the dramatic action. Practically, too, it is of value in engaging the attention of the audience by drawing them on from stage to stage of the development of the story, where they might otherwise lose themselves amid a maze of irrelevant detail.

This device may be said to have made its first appearance in the course of Mozart's greatest work, *Don Giovanni*, though in a rudimentary form, and Weber subsequently adopted it in *Der Freischütz*, where, among other distinctive themes, two constantly recurring subjects are associated with the Heroine of the story and the Daemon. In the domain of purely instrumental music, to which leitmotive are perfectly adapted in the realization of 'programme music', the earliest examples are to be found in the *Symphonie Fantastique* of Berlioz, where what he terms *idée fixe* is used in the manner of a 'leitmotiv'. Thus his music may be described as a representation of varied and intense passions, of dramatic scenes and situations, the purpose of which was to effect a closer connexion between instrumental music and the noblest poetry. In his preface to this work he makes his position perfectly clear. 'The composer', he writes, 'aims at developing various episodes in the life of an artist, so far as they can be described in music. The programme (which is essential to the full understanding of the dramatic plan of the work) ought

therefore to be considered in the light of the spoken text of an opera, serving as a guide to the development of the music and an index of its character and expression.' How, then, does he differ from Beethoven, 'who always had a picture in his thoughts when he was composing'? The answer is that it makes all the difference whether the picture or story is the deciding factor in the development of the piece, as it is in the works of Berlioz, or whether the development follows along the lines of the *musical* idea, which is the course Beethoven adopted. The result of the former is the instrumental drama with its 'leitmotiv' or *idée fixe*, and of the latter the instrumental symphony with subjects complete. This idea is worked out more thoroughly still in the 'Symphonic Poems' of Liszt, which are intended as musical counterparts of actual existing poems, on such subjects as Prometheus, Mazeppa, and Orpheus. In his 'Faust' symphony he breaks away from the old symphonic form farther even than Berlioz, and uses subjects and figures for describing individuals, circumstances, or ideas. The work falls into three divisions, corresponding to the three principal characters, Faust, Margaret, and Mephistopheles. Figures are used, just as Wagner used them, to depict anxiety, agitation, scorn, and love, while each individual has a musical counterpart.

It will be seen then that the significance of the 'leitmotiv' is understood in different senses by Berlioz and by Liszt. The former is thinking of a definite story and informs the listener of its progress by a running musical commentary. The latter, on the other hand, lays the emphasis on the pictorial aspect of his theme without much regard for the incidents of the story, and it is from his ideas, as

evolved in his orchestral works, that so many modern composers have chiefly borrowed.

It seems scarcely necessary here to point to Wagner's works as containing the most remarkable examples of leitmotive, as it is with his name that they are chiefly associated. In his earlier works, it is true, there are but suggestions of the device, but in the later works they are elaborated into a complete and coherent system.

A further and fuller study of the score will reveal many other remarkable traits and characteristics; first, though the atmosphere of the story is that of sixteenth-century Nuremberg, the music by which it is sustained is thoroughly modern in style. It might be imagined, therefore, that a certain incompatibility would result from such a combination, but, as a matter of fact, it is far otherwise; for, in spite of its modern setting, there is a very strong diatonic thread running through the musical pattern, which is always sufficiently dominant to preserve the atmosphere required.

Then, again, the important part played by the chorus cannot escape observation. In his other operas Wagner makes comparatively little use of it, but here it is often the life and soul of the action; both the first and second acts conclude in disorder, in which the chorus plays by no means a subsidiary part, and does not the final verdict in the contest depend upon 'the chorus'? Hence the unprecedented number of polyphonic passages for the voice parts, quite irrespective of many noble contrapuntal adventures on the part of the orchestra; for the complexity and elaboration of the orchestral score is a study in itself.

With regard to Wagner's treatment of the solo parts, his choice of melody springs directly from the

words; it is often quite independent of the orchestra, and sometimes is scarcely more than the *spoken* inflexion of ordinary language. In his earliest operatic works he tried to find melodies which should be effective from the singer's point of view, but in *Tannhäuser*, for example, the melodic curve is influenced by the action of the drama. By the time he embarked upon the *Master-Singers*, however, his style was fully developed and the melody copies the natural modulation of the words in the sentence.

In the matter of orchestration Wagner again is a supreme master; and his achievements in that sphere can best be realized, perhaps, by comparing his treatment of the score with Beethoven's. Rarely does he introduce instruments unknown to Beethoven, but treats each group (Strings, Wood-wind, and Brass) as a 'family' in order to get full chords from each. Thus where Beethoven would use only two clarinets, Wagner would add a third clarinet, and bass clarinet too, as occasion required; a third bassoon and 'contra-bassoon' would be added to the original two, and the two trumpets would be supplemented by a third and a bass trumpet. This enabled the various 'families' of the orchestra to produce more effective contrasts one against another, and added much greater variety to the work thus arranged.

In addition to this we observe an effect of richness which he obtains, sometimes by a more complex arrangement of the inner parts of the strings, sometimes by a wholesale subdivision of violins, violas, and 'cellos, and at other times by the use of chromatics in horn and trumpet parts. All this means a fuller effect than Beethoven could produce, yet one which is remarkably pure.

There are works of Wagner, of course, in which he

does employ a number of extra instruments, as the eight horns, the six harps, or the thirteen brass instruments in the *Rheingold*, but in each case they are introduced to obtain special effects, and their use is thereby justified.

Without qualification it may be said that, whereas some of Wagner's instrumental accompaniments betray a tendency to overpower both chorus and soloists, the outstanding feature of the score of the *Master-Singers*, at any rate, is the restraint and discretion of its orchestral texture, where the instrumentation, though always rich and sometimes sonorous as well, is never unrestrained; it is worthy of note, for example, that the full orchestra is seldom employed for any length of time throughout the work. His close attention to the smallest details, also, is worthy of observation. Notice, for example, the far-off organ effect in Act III, when violas and 'cellos are divided into two parts, each of which plays in double stopping—eight notes in all (Full Score, p. 355, bar 7, et seq.); and also the effect of the lowest 'cello strings in the melody with which the same act opens. There are many passages, too, where the double basses are omitted and the 'cellos support the harmony, while the ingenuity and originality of his use of the wind 'family' are no less remarkable.

The triangle part, even, is arranged with the utmost care, and is held to be a model of good scoring. Treatment of the glockenspiel, too, in the Waltz tune in Act III reveals the same love of detail; here the same phrase is played three times by this instrument, but each time with a slightly different arrangement of the wood-wind.

The Story of The Master-Singers

It is the vigil of the Feast of St. John the Baptist, Midsummer Day, and the whole town of Nuremberg is busy preparing for the festivities of the morrow. Within the church of St. Katharine the service has just concluded, and Walther von Stolzig, a young knight, finds himself alone with Eva, daughter of the wealthy Pogner, and, attracted by the grace and beauty of her person, makes use of the opportunity of conversing with her. Meanwhile David, the leading apprentice of the Master-Singers' Guild, and pupil of Hans Sachs, is busy superintending the work of his comrades who are preparing the stage for the meeting of the Guild. He is intrigued but not a little delighted that Magdalena, Eva's maid, with whom he is in love, has promised to make him a cake if he can help Walther to gain admission to the Guild.

Pogner, too, has made a promise: to him who shall be elected Master-Singer at the Feast, Eva, his daughter, shall be given in marriage. It is essential to 'the cause', therefore, that Walther should become a Master-Singer. David now proceeds to cross-examine him on his knowledge of the Master-Singers' craft, and finds that not only has he failed to qualify for the preliminary trials, but also that he is completely ignorant of the Guild's regulations; Walther's presumption, in fact, completely staggers the senior apprentice.

Soon all things are ready, including the Master's closet, with desk, slate, and chalk, complete, and the Masters assemble to make the final arrangements. First Pogner makes an official announcement of his

promise, but Sachs the poet-cobbler, who is the 'mind' of the Master-Singers' Guild, suggests that the people themselves should choose the new master, in his fear that mere prejudice and adherence to custom should oust the individuality of genius. This, however, is opposed by his colleagues, but Pogner interposes the suggestion that one who, though not previously a member, is yet of gentle birth and versed in song, may become a member if approved by himself. This proposal also fails to win general approval, but all insist upon an immediate trial, entrusting the office of marker to Beckmesser, the town clerk, a conceited old musical 'die-hard' who himself is in love with Eva. Thus Walther stands forward, and, inspired by the thought of his beloved, pours forth a rapturous song, when suddenly he is interrupted by Beckmesser, who rushes out from his closet and fiercely declares that his slate is so full of 'bad marks' that there is no more room for recording any further faults. At this the masters begin to laugh and scoff, but Sachs, finding in the song signs of genius which outweigh all the rules of the Guild, protests and champions the cause of Walther; the assembly breaks up in confusion.

It is now getting late, and Sachs, having lit his lamp, takes up his tools; but he is able to do little work, because his mind is full of the song that Walther had sung, and it grieves him to think of the way in which it had been sacrificed to the observance of petty rules and meticulous conventions. He is roused from his reflections by the sound of Eva's voice; she has heard through Magdalena rumours of Walther's failure, and, on the pretext of bringing her shoes to be fitted, has come to Sachs to find out the truth of the matter.

Then comes Magdalena with the news that Eva's

father, Pogner, is calling for her, and that Beckmesser intends to practise his song for the morrow as a serenade beneath her window. Eva departs, and, as she approaches the house, Walther appears; but there is only time for the briefest of greetings, and the knight is left to himself and his thoughts again. Meanwhile Sachs, suspecting that all is not well in the street outside, moves his light so that he may watch events without being seen himself.

First comes Magdalena as he thinks, but on seeing her rush into Walther's arms, he realizes that it is really Eva, disguised in the clothes of her maid. Walther now urges her to fly with him, but Sachs, who has known her and loved her from childhood, is anxious to prevent her from doing what she may afterwards regret. He rearranges his light, therefore, so that it shines full clear upon the lovers, and, as he expected, they retreat into the darkness only to have their exit blocked by Beckmesser, who has come up with his lute to serenade Eva. He tunes his lute and waits; presently, in the silence, the sonorous voice of Sachs is heard trolling out a jolly cobbler's song, much to his disgust, for he fears that Eva will think it to be his own serenade; but louder and louder swells the song. Soon the window opens, and Magdalena, in Eva's dress, looks out, whereupon Beckmesser, not perceiving the disguise, implores Sachs to desist; but he, on the plea that he is mending Beckmesser's shoes and that he will do his work all the better to music, refuses to stop. Beckmesser then implores him to listen to his own effort, in order that he may receive suggestions for its improvement. This Sachs consents to do, but warns him that, as unofficial marker, he will strike a blow with his hammer for every musical fault. So Beckmesser sings, but he

is so incompetent a musician that his rhythm is totally unsuited to the accent of the verse; at every false accent, therefore, Sachs hammers loudly, and the affair soon resolves itself into a prolonged contest between the strokes of the hammer and Beckmesser's voice. The din becomes so great that one by one the neighbours open their windows and protest. At length David, fired with jealousy at the sight of Magdalena making signs to Beckmesser, leaps from his window and trounces the unfortunate serenader with his stick. The voice of Pogner is now heard calling for his daughter and her maid just as Walther is on the point of escaping with his beloved; but Sachs rushes out and, seizing him with one hand, gives Eva into her father's care with the other; he then proceeds to kick David into his house. In the distance the watchman is heard sounding his horn; the panic-stricken neighbours return to their beds, and peace is restored. The next day, of couse, is the great day, and Sachs is sitting by his window brooding over the events of the previous evening. Presently he is roused from his reverie by the appearance of Walther, who is anxious to relate a happy dream he has had; this he proceeds to do in a beautiful song, so beautiful that Sachs is anxious to write it down for him. It only wants one verse more, in his estimation, to prove a real master-song. He has already given secret orders to Walther's squire to prepare festal robes, and Walther is donning them in an adjacent room. Sachs goes to seek him, leaving the song on the table. Beckmesser now enters, gaily dressed but physically *hors de combat* after his cudgelling at the hands of David. On seeing the manuscript he jumps to the conclusion that Sachs, of whose friendship for Eva he has always been intensely jealous, is intending

to compete, and had planned the brawl of the previous evening in order that he might gain the victory and Eva. With mingled feelings of anger and consternation Beckmesser pockets the song and abuses Sachs on his return to the room. The latter, however, is quite good natured about it all, and, observing that the manuscript has disappeared, makes him a present of it, greatly to the satisfaction of Beckmesser, of course, who extracts a promise from him not to disclose the true authorship! After him comes Eva, in all the glory of her bridal array. Pretending once more that her shoes need to be fitted, she comes to beg the help of Sachs on Walther's behalf. Presently Walther reappears, apparelled as a knight, and stands entranced at her beauty. Oblivious of Sachs's presence, they remain transfixed by each other's beauty, and from Walther's passion the third verse of the Mastersong is born.

Then all three set forth to the fields where the people have assembled to witness the contest. After the herald has called for silence, he commands Beckmesser to come forth and begin his song, but, alas for him, the song has proved too difficult to learn; he has his own serenade 'on the brain' and 'cannot disentangle' the two melodies; moreover, he has not yet recovered from his aches and pains. The song, of course, is a hopeless failure, and the people show their disapproval of it by their chaff and laughter; but he, not to be outdone, suddenly announces that its composer was none other than Sachs himself, and the crowd demands an explanation. But Sachs, ever equal to the occasion, replies that he had no powers to compose so noble a song; that Beckmesser had rendered it most incompetently; and that the real composer, who was present, would sing it as it ought

to be sung. Walther then comes forward and pours forth his dream of Eva and Paradise in a rapturous song. It takes them all, Masters and people, by storm, who acclaim him the greatest master-singer of the day. Whereupon Pogner graciously bestows his daughter on the young knight, but not without first expressing his gratitude to Sachs for his conduct of the affair, and all Nuremberg rejoices in the happy denouement.

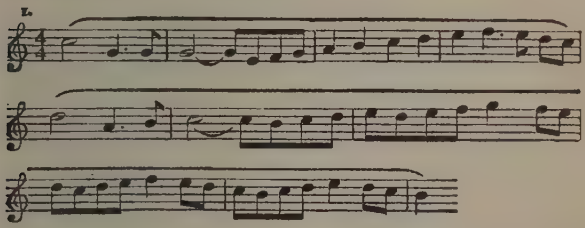
A Conclusion

It should not be difficult to detect in this story a parable of Wagner's own life-story, which was, of course, a continual struggle against the dragons of convention and prejudice. Here these are personified in the Guild of Master-Singers, with all its pedantry and exclusiveness, which Walther, after many a failure, is ultimately successful in overcoming. Their malice as composer-critics is well represented by Beckmesser, who is the very incarnation of 'envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness', besides being utterly devoid of any sense of humour. Sachs, the real hero of the story, on the other hand, stands for the enlightened public, which, as so often, was the first to appreciate the nobility of Wagner's music, and it is he who is really responsible for the final verdict of his fellow master-singers.

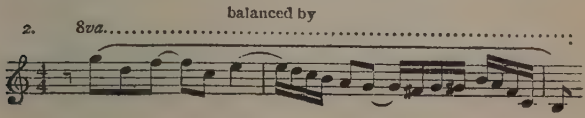
The opera, then, may be regarded as a satire on the leaders of contemporary musical thought in Germany, just as the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan ridiculed the fads and fancies of the Englishmen of their own day.

An Analysis Annotated

The overture, like those of most of Wagner's overtures, proves to be a brief summary of the whole work. Here will be found the main motives on which the opera is based. In the matter of orchestration, too, the overture is an epitome of the whole in the sense that it gives the listener a very fair sample of the brilliance and colour with which the rest of the music is adorned. It opens with the announcement of a majestic melody, known as the master-singers' motive, and depicts the Guild with all its quaint mannerisms and traditions[1]:

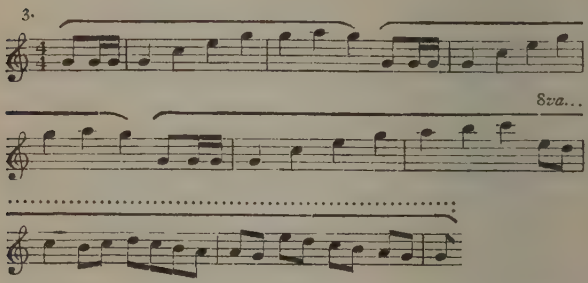


At the 27th bar, however, the character of the music suddenly changes and a phrase from the Prize song, balanced by 'repartee', is dominant for a few bars:

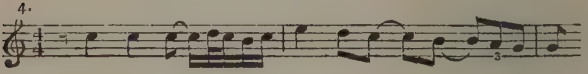


[1] All the quotations in this book are taken, by permission, from Schott's edition of the work.

Then by a nimble, swerving, semiquaver bridge the Master-Singers' March is reached, which rings out with an ornate and solemn grandeur. This melody was not, of course, Wagner's own; indeed it was Heinrich Muglin's, and familiar to the Master-Singers as the 'Long tune':



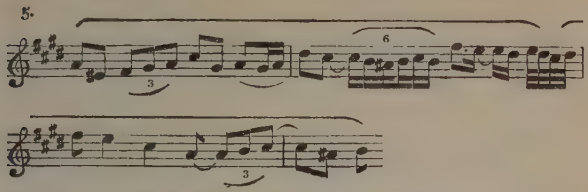
But it may be confidently asserted that Wagner has made it his own by the superb orchestral colouring with which he has decked it out. After being played twice through it gives place to the Guild motive (1),[1] which is now developed, worked up to a magnificent climax (p. 4), and down again to a restless little phrase suggestive of Walther's anxiety and impetuosity in the matter of winning the hand of Eva:



Then with great sweetness and expression is heard the melody from the third stanza of the Prize song, but transposed into E major, and in four time instead

[1] These numbers refer to the musical quotations in the text.

of three, and followed uninterruptedly by a passage from the middle section of the second trial song (p. 145):

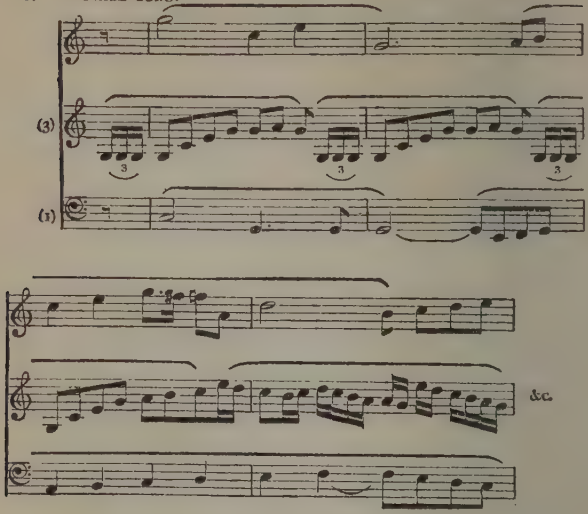


This is balanced by development for some bars until the Guild motive (1) emerges, but this time in a staccato and sprightly fashion, which is more reminiscent of the gay young apprentices than of their staid and solemn masters. As a matter of fact, Wagner has allowed them a little phrase all to themselves—a child of this jovial rhythm (p. 8), which in itself is eloquent enough of the proverbial cheek of the young student all the world over.

No sooner is the Guild motive reintroduced (p. 6) than a variation of 5 reappears for two bars in the middle of it (p. 7), and the effect is repeated seven bars later, but this time it is followed by the 'Apprentice phrase' already noted. Then we are quickly back again with 1 in the treble and, in counterpoint to it, the same phrase again.

Soon 1 is heard in sonorous tones from the brass, and leads into a passage containing a masterly combination of different tunes. Above are heard the thrilling tones of the Prize song, to which the Guild motive forms the foundation, while, in the middle, the march is blared forth with all the sonority of the Wagnerian brass, that is, three distinct themes co-operating to produce one magnificent paean of triumph:

6. PRIZE SONG.



Bar follows bar with an ever-increasing wealth of harmony and orchestral colour which has seldom, if ever, been surpassed in the whole field of musical composition, until at last the overture is brought to an end just as the unaccompanied voices in four-part harmony begin the chorale, making an effective contrast to all the elaborate polyphony which has preceded it.

ACT I

Scene 1. This chorale, punctuated by, and concluding with, snatches of the Prize song, seems to provide just the right atmosphere for the setting of the act; for the guilds of the Middle Ages were

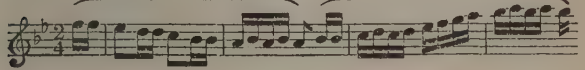
intimately connected with the Church and duly respected the observances of religion.

The service over, the music breaks out into recitative. Here (p. 21) we have an example of Wagner's proleptic use of a motive; from the accompaniment there suddenly appears an allusion to the St. John the Baptist's Day theme (11), which does not make its full appearance until the third scene of the act. Until and unless the student is conversant with the opera as a whole, the point of the allusion here would be entirely lost.

Ex. 9 in various keys continues to be heard, but presently (p. 24) there are two or three brief quotations from 2; then David enters from the sacristy (p. 26), and his approach is heralded by part of the Guild motive which, together with frequent recurrences of the march, persists up till the point of Eva's question to Walther, 'When shall I see you?' (p. 37), when 4 is reannounced and modulated; then the Prize song melody, another instance of proleptic use, brings the first scene to a fitting conclusion.

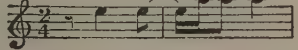
One important motive, often accompanying the appearance of the apprentices, should be noted (p. 30):

7.



Also of importance is Ex. 8 (p. 33), which is always reminiscent of the pert but well-meaning David:

8.



Scene 2, connected with the first by a phrase from the Prize song in a quickened rhythm, is given up almost

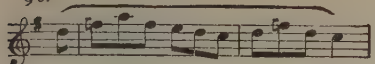
entirely to David and his fellow apprentices, and is consequently sparkling with vivacious humour. First, in the course of some harmless fooling, 8 becomes a kind of yodel in the mouths of David's mocking companions (pp. 42–3); next follows a series of chords of the seventh embellished with trills (pp. 45–6), which form the basis of the accompaniment to an amusing dialogue between David and Walther; after a brief allusion to 8 (p. 47) and further chords of the seventh, there is a quotation (p. 47) from the closing phrase of Sachs's song in Act II, Scene 5.

Now follows a quaint musical description of the Master-Singers' art from David's point of view, the realistic accompaniment of which should be especially noted (pp. 48–51). A phrase from the Prize song, 2 (p. 52), then, as David proceeds with his droll description of the Masters' 'tones' and 'measures', the music, as before, interprets his words with consummate effect (pp. 53–61); towards its conclusion 18 appears in the bass (p. 58) according to Wagner's use of a motive by anticipation, already alluded to; later there is a brief quotation from the first two bars of the march (p. 59), which is presently heard (p. 63) with semi-quaver decoration; a phrase from the Prize song then brings the episode to a close (p. 64).

While the apprentices are busily engaged in altering the stage for the singing contest, 7 is heard throughout both in its original and developed forms (pp. 65–70), when suddenly the thought of the menacing marker, at which Walther grows pale, introduces us to a short monotonic phrase (p. 70), suggesting chalk marks angrily inscribed on a slate. The scene ends with a jovial song by David, which is taken up in chorus by the apprentices:

9 *a.*

9 *b.*



Scene 3 opens with music of some solemnity, as befits the environment of the worthy Pogner, and a short phrase, intimately associated with the contest (p. 75),

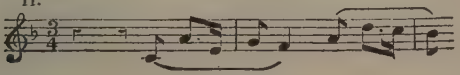
10 *a.*

which is subsequently developed into (p. 77)

10 *b.*

sustains the work for some pages, interspersed with quotations from the Prize song whenever the thought warrants them. It is remarkable how freely the music continues to weave its pattern from these two slender threads, quite independently of the vocal parts. For a short space (p. 91) the flow is interrupted by recitative, but this soon gives place to a rapturous song (p. 92), in which Pogner announces his intention of giving his daughter Eva in marriage to the winner of the contest, and this haunting refrain is constantly heard both in the melody and accompaniment:

11.



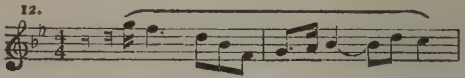
and it constantly recurs throughout the work, seeming to breathe the joys of Midsummer Day, the great

feast of St. John the Baptist, on which the singing contest was annually held.

In the very heart of this song there are suggestions of the march (pp. 96–7) in triple rhythm, which are prominently announced on the strings.

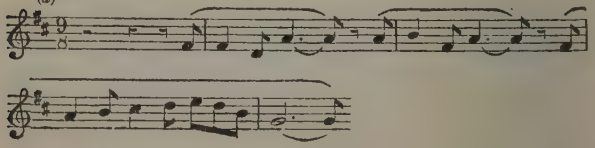
As the discussion on Pogner's 'motion' proceeds, various motives, already referred to, emerge; 10 (*a*), 11, 1, and 9 (*a*) and (*b*) (p. 112), sometimes alone, sometimes in mutual combination. Most conspicuous among them, perhaps, is the scalewise semiquaver figure taken from 1, which constantly forms the counterpoint to the other motives. Soon, however, a new motive is introduced in buoyant rhythm as Sir Walther is presented for admission to the Guild (p. 119),

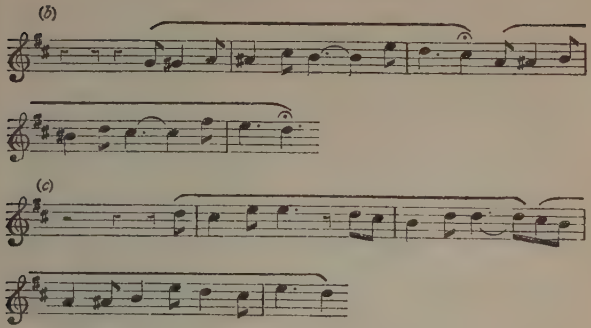
12.



and continues to dominate the score for some pages, then, with the merest hint of the Prize song (p. 126), we are listening to one of the loveliest lyrics ever written. It has three stanzas; the first and second having the same melody, but differing as regards their orchestral accompaniment; whereas the third is much more ecstatic in its utterance. Two of its phrases should be especially noticed, as they often recur in the course of Hans Sachs's meditations; these are subscribed together with the opening sentence of the song:

13. (*a*)





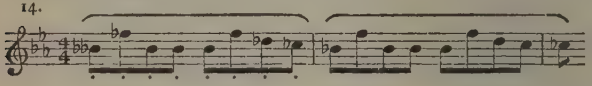
This song is one of the many scattered throughout the opera, which can easily be detached from its context and rendered as a separate item. The opening notes of the phrase (*b*), being especially characteristic of Wagner, should be observed.

The easy flow of the music is now suddenly arrested by the carping objections of Beckmesser, and the 'chalk marking' motive is heard (p. 135), soon to be succeeded by 12 (p. 136), when Beckmesser warns Walther that in his official capacity he will show him no mercy. While Kothner prepares to read the rules for song-making, this motive naturally gives place to the Guild motive, which is given out in sonorous tones in the bass.

This statement of the rules of conventional song-writing is converted into a delightful parody of the German oratorio style with its pompous roulades for singer and orchestra, which Wagner satirizes with delicious effect (pp. 140–3). Any one who is familiar with Handelian oratorio will be quick to appreciate its humour.

A bridge-like allusion to 12 (p. 143) brings us to another exquisite lyric, in charming contrast to Kothner's lusty proclamation. It is evidently Wagner's idea of the way in which a song ought to be written. One of its phrases, already quoted in the overture (5), will be heard again and again, especially in connexion with Sachs's reflections on its haunting beauty in the second act. Its two stanzas are separated by the sound of Beckmesser's scratching on the slate (p. 147), when its corresponding motive is given a brief hearing; meanwhile he is growing more and more jealous as Walther proceeds with his song. At its close there appears a new motive in illustration of the marker's petulant anger (p. 151):

14.

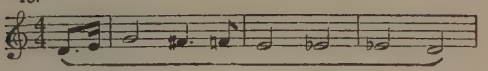


and this is heard to vie with 12, in imitation of his quarrel with Walther on the question of breaking the conventional rules of song; soon other master-singers join in the dispute while 14 is repeated over and over again with ever-growing intensity (pp. 153–7) and with such dissonant harmony as to suggest the disordered condition of Beckmesser's mind. After an amusing example of 'coloratura grace' (p. 157), 6 reappears and is worked up to a thrilling climax (p. 159), whereupon Sachs interposes in the dispute with his characteristic calmness and sense of proportion (p. 159); this translated into music becomes:

15.

Just previous to this, however, one short phrase, pregnant with grief, should be noted (p. 159):

16.



Then with further references to 16, 14 (pp. 160, 161), 1 (p. 162), and 11 (p. 163), the dispute grows more acrid, and in a wild and whirling song (p. 164) Beckmesser abuses Sachs for bad workmanship. An anticipatory allusion to 18 is worthy of note, as being made considerable use of in the later stages of the story (p. 165). Without any pause in the current of the music, the Master-Singers burst in (p. 167) with exclamations of disgust at Walther's song, and then both voices and orchestra combine in one magnificent web of polyphonic writing, in the midst of which are heard from the orchestra the 'chalk' motive (pp. 168, 169), an allusion to Sachs's song in the next act (pp. 173 and 265), and several sequential repetitions of 5 (pp. 176–80); but at the point where the apprentices join in the action, not to quarrel like their masters, but to dance and sing (p. 181), Walther is heard singing 13 (*c*) against the apprentices' song 9, which grows in volume until it is entirely predominant (pp. 183, 184); once more 5 struggles to make itself heard in the upper part for a few bars (p. 185), but soon is forced to confess defeat and leave its antagonist once more supreme. Then (p. 185) the rollicking music is brought to a momentary halt by the intrusion of 5, but resumes its sprightliness once more for four bars, dying away to a pianissimo. The act concludes with the Guild motive given out on the bassoons with a becomingly ludicrous effect, as if to burlesque its ponderous pomposity.

So far the chief interest of the score has been in the introduction of new motives. But with the next act the musical interest is shifted; familiar motives

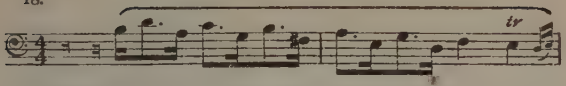
appear all over the score, but combined and contrasted in brilliant manner. This act, with its seven scenes, is chiefly remarkable for its versatility and movement. It glows with life and action from beginning to end, and nothing could be more appropriate than the music by which it is sustained.

Act II

Scene 1. The orchestral introduction (pp. 190–1) makes great play with 11 while the harmonic structure is being prepared in order to provide a congenial accompaniment to the apprentices' song, which begins with a simple phrase (p. 192), with 11 forming a counterpoint to it; then, after hearing a snatch from David's song, 9 (*b*) (p. 192), we observe the apprentices resuming their chorus (pp. 193, 194). Soon Magdalena appears (p. 195), and, after some reiterations of 10 (pp. 195, 196), during which she interrogates David as to Walther's luck in the trial, the apprentices pursue their song to its conclusion (pp. 197–201). The entry of Sachs (p. 201) is announced by a motive, a suggestion of which has already been given before:

indicative of bustling energy and industry, which, after being in evidence for a few bars (pp. 201–2), gives place to music of a more reflective and deeply thoughtful nature on the arrival of Pogner and his daughter at the beginning of *Scene* 2 (p. 203); but just previous to this quietude there are three bars (p. 203) in which a three-note phrase is dexterously combined with 17. But, later, at the thought of Nuremberg yet another new motive greets the ear:

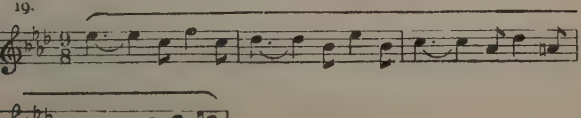
18.



and this might well be regarded as expressing the pride of the citizens in their quaint old town. Uninterruptedly it is heard until the close of Pogner's song (p. 208), and then, for three bars only, a new version of an earlier motive appears in altered rhythm, associated here, as before, with Magdalena. A short recitative (p. 209) carries us to a motive (p. 210) unheard as yet, but to be made good use of later by Sachs. This soon, however, makes way for the three-note phrase, and then with a fragment of 16 the scene closes.

Scene 3. Presently 17 is heard busily going in the bass (pp. 211, 212) and, after it has died away to nothing, 5 is given out once very softly (but only to be repeated continually in the course of the following pages), and is immediately succeeded by 17 again. This arresting motive (from the second trial song), which Wagner employs with such a liberal hand, very appropriately serves as the prelude to Sachs's meditations on its haunting beauty (pp. 212–18). Its orchestral accompaniment is, as befits the theme, of the most exquisite texture, being woven from threads of 5 (pp. 215, 216), 13 (*c*) (p. 217), and 13 (*b*) (p. 218), which brings us to the opening of the fourth scene and Eva's entry (p. 218). The music now assumes a more lyrical character, being comprised almost entirely of the ascending phrase from the top of p. 210, and a new motive (pp. 218, 219):

19.



both of which are developed at length and treated with consummate skill. For a short space (p. 229), during which Sachs tells Eva of the result of the trial, a quieter atmosphere prevails, and 16 is heard twice (p. 229) as if to emphasize the bitterness of it all. But at the suggestion of 'a knight' we hear a good deal of 12 (pp. 230, 231), and the stream resumes its merry course, only to be checked again by the reintroduction of the ascending phrase (p. 231), a bar from 14, and several repetitions of 16 (pp. 232, 233). Presently the thought of Beckmesser and his churlishness brings 14 into play, which keeps the orchestra busy for some time (pp. 233–5); in the midst of all this there is an allusion (p. 234) to Sachs's song in the next scene. Then 17 is heard again in the lowest part (pp. 235, 236), growing in intensity and deliberation, until its place is taken by 16 (p. 236), which moves slowly in contrast to the groups of five quavers which accompany it.

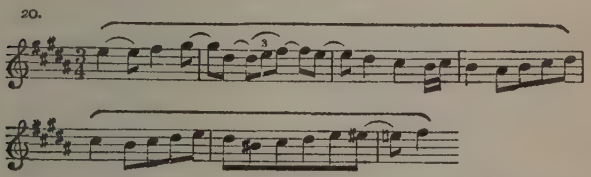
So the motives come and go with kaleidoscopic rapidity. First 14 (p. 237), then 16 (p. 238), followed by another familiar motive (p. 239), and 14 yet again (p. 240), after which 17 is prominent in the midst of a treble and bass 'pedal' (pp. 240, 241), bringing us to the close of the fourth scene.

Scene 5. The fifth scene introduces another section of great lyrical beauty, with Eva and Walther alone on the stage. After the announcement of 12 and a short interlude, Eva sings to the accompaniment of 16, which is woven around her song with incomparable charm (pp. 243–6); then, as Walther answers her the tempo quickens and 16 is worked up to a climax (pp. 244, 245), reintroducing Eva's song and the lilting figure (16) of the accompaniment. At the point of Walther's rejoinder (p. 246) more life and movement are imparted to the music as he continues

and it is not long before the Guild motive is heard in full (p. 247), followed by a passing allusion to 5 (p. 248). Meanwhile the music becomes more and more impulsive as Walther implores Eva to fly with him, 16 being distinguishable from the wealth of throbbing chords with which it is accompanied (p. 249). Then as he passes on to a tirade against the Master-Singers in general and Beckmesser in particular (pp. 250–2), distorted fragments of 1 and 14 hold converse with each other until their climax becomes an anti-climax, as the watchman's horn is heard blowing a long, loud blast, and Walther grips his sword at the sound, fearing danger!

But, on his being reassured by Eva, the music suddenly becomes calm and sustained, and we are enthralled by a new motive of exquisite delicacy (p. 253), which is frequently heard during the course of the excited stichomiuthia which follow: the second bar contains a very typical phrase,

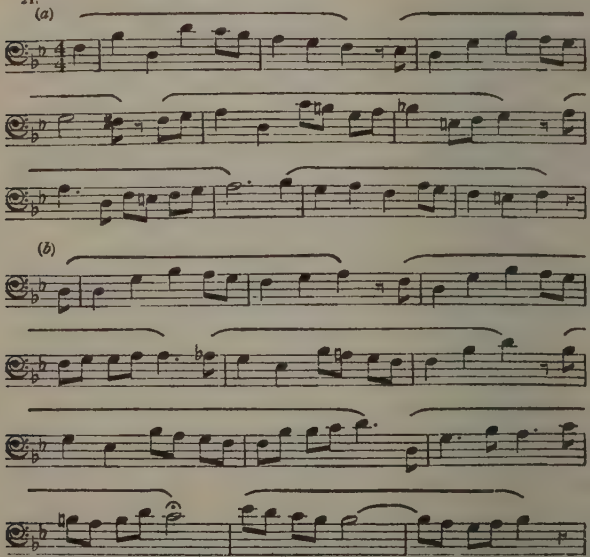
20.



while, for the first time since its appearance in the overture, a fragment of 4 is given out very softly (pp. 253, 254) and repeated frequently until the watchman delivers himself of an impressive, though becomingly simple, 'cry' (p. 254), at the conclusion of which he blows his horn again with very comic effect (p. 255). After a reference to 17 (p. 255) and a resumption of 20, the tune of the Prize song gently steals upon the ear (pp. 256, 257), but is soon succeeded by 17, which synchronizes with the note of the watchman's horn in

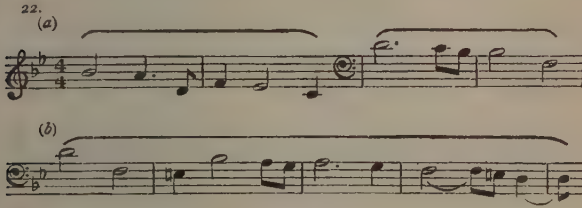
the distance (p. 257). The music now assumes a calmer tone, and 20 quietly re-enters as the Walther-Eva duet proceeds (pp. 258, 259). But suddenly Beckmesser is heard tuning his lute in readiness to accompany his serenade to Eva (p. 260), then tremolo chords on the strings are heard, as if to suggest the excitement which his arrival causes (pp. 260, 261). But Sachs is evidently determined that Beckmesser shall not carry out his project, for as the latter is preparing to sing his song, Sachs strikes a heavy blow on the last with his hammer to the accompaniment of 17, and begins to sing himself (p. 262), but not without frequent protests from Beckmesser. It is a jovial song that he sings, and full of humour too; after a short introduction it begins thus (pp. 263, 264):

21.



At the conclusion of verse 1 (p. 266), Beckmesser tries to get a hearing to the accompaniment of his petulant motive (14), but Sachs embarks upon the second verse (p. 267), the melody of which is identical with the first, though it introduces a good deal of orchestral comment.

Once more Beckmesser protests, to the accompaniment of 17 (p. 271) and 14 (p. 272), but Sachs is one too much for him again, and much to his disgust, with more volume than ever, proceeds with verse 3 with still more orchestral comment. At the tenth bar of the song a beautiful melody is heard in counterpoint to it (pp. 273, 274), played by oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons:



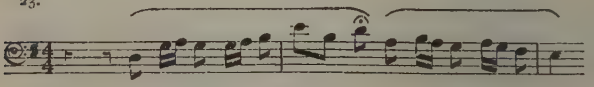
This section is repeated at the close of the song, the voice part being played by the strings (pp. 276, 277).

While Beckmesser is trying the art of flattery on Sachs, having failed to gain his ear by other methods, we notice a frequent use of 17 (pp. 278, 279). But Sachs gives answer in a song charged with sarcasm and mockery, which exactly reproduces all that Beckmesser has already said and sung in disparagement of Sachs's powers of shoemaking (pp. 280, 281; cf. pp. 164, 165).

Presently, after 17 has been given out with great emphasis and deliberation, Beckmesser begins to 'strike up' again to the accompaniment of 1 in a new

rhythm (p. 282), as he pleads with Sachs for an impartial criticism of his home-made song. While Sachs is returning answer, 9 (*b*) gains a momentary hearing (p. 283), but at last Beckmesser, who can control his fury no longer, gives it full vent in a torrential recitative (pp. 283–7), violently abusing Sachs all the while: most prominent in the course of this are 17 and a quotation from 1 (p. 286). As the altercation proceeds 17 peeps out occasionally in the lowest part, also fragments of 14 in varying rhythms, but for some time afterwards (pp. 290–3) snatches of 1 follow one another almost without interruption from any other source. Then, with further allusions to 17 and 1 (pp. 292–4), we are back again in the placid environment of 20, which is announced by the night watchman's horn (p. 294). At long last Beckmesser begins his serenade (p. 296), preceded first by a long cadenza on his instrument:

23.



It is just a gorgeous parody of an Italianized German operatic serenade, such as was current in Wagner's day. As neither words nor music fit each other, the actual effect is simply ludicrous, and gives Sachs plenty of scope for his criticisms. Thus the song, as sung, is punctuated from beginning to end by heavy blows from Sachs's hammer on the last. After Sachs has given him three 'black marks' for verse one, he begins again (p. 299), and so this preposterous serenade proceeds. Meanwhile Sachs is working away as noisily as he can with Beckmesser's shoes, and, for a few bars, some notes from 1 are heard, during which Sachs assures him that he is only 'marking' (p. 303). But

Beckmesser is soon 'off' again, accompanied now not only by his lute, but also by little demisemiquaver phrases from the orchestra. At last Sachs's work is done, and the fact is proclaimed by the announcement of 21 on the strings, together with a quickly pulsating version of the 'chalk' motive by flutes, oboes, and clarinets (p. 309). But the other has by no means finished, and so he takes up his strain once more, not alone, however, for one by one his fellow Master-Singers enter upon the scene and express their indignation at the unseemly din he is creating when he ought to be in bed (pp. 312 et seq.). The orchestra, too, adds comments of its own in the course of a remarkable piece of contrapuntal writing, Beckmesser still ploughing on with his eventful song.

The sixth scene passes without break into the seventh (p. 318), and, in the midst of the *mêlée* which follows, David sets upon Beckmesser and beats him loud and long to a most realistic motive:

24.

which, combined with the tune of Beckmesser's song, appears continually in different parts of the orchestra, while any number of vocal parts from 5 to 15 are heard in a concatenation of magnificent harmonies. Thus the motive is first announced on violins, oboes, and clarinets, with 'cellos and basses playing a scale-wise counterpoint to it (p. 319), then by brass, clarinets, and horns (p. 320), and again by the first-named group (p. 321). It next appears very prominently in the bass on horns, bassoons, 'cellos, and basses (p. 323), then, after some skilful interplay of the various parts, 24 is heard on the horns, bassoons, and basses (pp. 325–6)

with pedal points interspersed. While these are held, oboes, clarinets, and violins give out 24. And so the music rushes on in ever-growing intensity and ever-changing colours, with these two themes as the basis of its operations. There are also some very brilliant imitative figures occurring towards its close (pp. 336 et seq.) which are well worthy of notice, yet, easily distinguishable from the harmonic mass, 8 stands out conspicuously, played by trumpets and horns (pp. 342–6). Indeed, it is altogether an inimitable passage, every detail of which plays its appropriate part.

At the moment of the night watchman's entrance (p. 347), 24 is given a rest and 20 is sounded forth with great sonority, but only to make way for 24 once more (p. 348); then, with the night watchman's song (p. 349), a fragment of 24, and a gentle allusion to 23, the curtain falls on the second act.

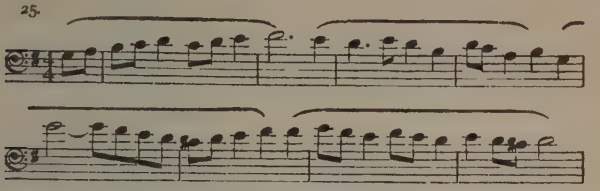
Act III

The opening of this act is in marked contrast to all the clamour which has preceded it, and the result is inevitably effective, the orchestral introduction suggesting thought and reflection too deep for words; 22 (*a*) and (*b*) are already familiar to us in connexion with the meditative side of Sachs's nature, and here they form the basis of the prelude, which has been described as marking the highest point of the dramatic action; for here a decision is made, which will ultimately affect all the chief characters whose actions we are following with such interest. The music thus seems to reveal the innermost recesses of the poet-cobbler's soul, and helps the listener to enter into the very chamber of his thoughts.

So the prelude opens with 22 (*a*) and (*b*) given out

with great poignancy by the 'cellos, and answered by 22 (*b*), after which a new motive makes its appearance (p. 351):

25.



This is immediately followed by part of 21 (*b*); then with a quotation or two from 5 (p. 352), a repetition of 22 (*a*) and (*b*), and a strain from the closing bars of 21 (*a*), this deeply moving prelude comes to an end.

Scene 1 opens with a number of allusions to 7 interspersed with 8 (p. 353), which, however, are temporarily held up by an unaccompanied announcement of 22 (*a*) and later by 22 (*b*) (p. 354). Thereafter great play is made of a fragment of 7 which persists throughout the score until the very first bar of Sachs's meditation (p. 366). Presently an allusion to Beckmesser (p. 357) reintroduces 24 for a brief space, which soon gives place to 7. Now, for a moment or two, we are listening to the ascending phrase (p. 358), and, as suddenly, we are back in the atmosphere of 7 (pp. 359, 360). After a quotation from 23 in the voice part, and a humorous allusion to 24 (p. 360), David sings his song. It is clearly composed of some old folk-tune, tricked out with simple harmonies, but interpenetrated by some very convincing counterpoint (pp. 361, 362). The now familiar 7 continues to be heard (p. 362), either in the ascendant or in the accompaniment, but is interrupted for a few bars by a pleasing major version of 16 and an allusion to 3 (p. 363), which is

then developed for some bars, and, as David is preparing to withdraw, is accompanied by a reappearance of 17 (p. 365); yet another quotation from 7 bears us on into still waters that run deep. The following monologue is indeed rich with themes already made known, which thread their way through the score with superlative congruity.

First 22 (*a*) and (*b*) (pp. 366, 367), then 4 (p. 367) and 22 (*a*) in quick succession; now the first four notes of 18 are heard (p. 368), and, soon after, the whole phrase in the various transformations of it which accompany the singer; later it quickens (p. 370) and loses its jaunty ta-fe-te rhythm; presently, after an allusion to 24, the music assumes a somewhat ethereal character, and 20 is announced, followed quickly by a pianissimo, staccato version of 24 (p. 371). Then follows a beautiful passage in which 11, 18, and 2 intermingle freely with the melody of Sachs's song (pp. 372–4), bringing us to the conclusion of scene 1.

Scene 2. After this 15, which has not been heard since the first act, is reannounced, and persists for some pages of the score (pp. 374–80); interspersed, however, are a number of allusions to 2 (pp. 375, 377, 380) and a solitary phrase from 22 (p. 379). From this point onward (p. 381) until the rehearsals of the Prize song are heard (p. 389), phrases from the second trial song, especially that quoted in 4, and from the Prize song itself, in varying rhythms and subtle colours, sustain the impassioned character of the music (pp. 381–6), in the very midst of which (pp. 382, 383) the opening sentence of 1 is blared forth on trumpets and trombones; but, towards the end of the section, 15 is again announced and then woven into the pattern as a middle thread, the music mean-

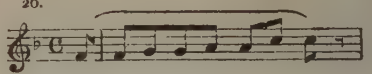
while assuming a quieter character. Then, at last, the first stanza of the Prize song is heard in all its splendid simplicity (p. 389); this is followed by a second (p. 390), ending in the dominant key, a plan of which, according to Sachs, the Master-Singers will not approve: so Walther is advised to make an 'after-song', as a fitting conclusion to the stanza. This he does (pp. 392, 393), and, acting once more on Sachs's advice, proceeds with the second verse of the song, which, though bearing the same melody, is treated to a rather more elaborate accompaniment (pp. 395–7). Immediately, on its conclusion, 15 is heard *in mediis rebus* (p. 397), followed by a phrase suggestive of 2. Now fragments of four familiar motives are presented in quick succession: 15 (p. 398), 18, a well-known phrase from the Prize song, and 12 (p. 399), culminating in a magnificent climax (p. 401), and dying away again until a recapitulation of 31 and 32 (p. 402) brings the second scene to a close.

Scene 3. Beckmesser now appears (p. 403) to the melody of 22 (*a*), and his state of mind can be easily fathomed from the musical allusions which follow: 12, 17, his lute vamp, 24, 23, and 14 (pp. 403–6), the orchestral interlude closing, as it has begun with a reference to 22 (p. 406). There are some extremely amusing instrumental 'effects' in this section, especially where horns and 'cellos alternate in playing a series of diminished ninths down the scale (p. 405), thus emphasizing the grotesque behaviour of the deluded Beckmesser.

As soon as he catches sight of the manuscript of the Prize song on Sachs's table, the melody itself is heard (p. 407), then, with brief quotations from 15 and 18 combined (p. 407), the rhythmic pattern of 12 is heard for some bars against 17 in the bass (pp. 408, 409), and

then but intermittently in the course of a lively encounter between Sachs and Beckmesser (pp. 410–16):

26.

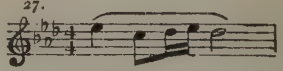


references to 24 (p. 412) and the 'chalk' motive (p. 413) should be observed. After a short strain from the Prize song (p. 416), there are many allusions to 15 (pp. 416–19), and then the tempo changes to 9-8 and very soon after to 6-8 (p. 420), when the music becomes more agitated and florid.

Presently there is another brief allusion to the same song and another to the 'chalk' motive (pp. 422–3), after which a short figure from the same occupies the chief place for some bars (p. 423). Beckmesser now repeats a tune which is already familiar from the third scene of Act I (p. 164), but this soon gives place to a version of 18 (p. 424) in the major mode, and shorn of its dotted rhythm, which forms the accompaniment to Beckmesser's expressions of delight in finding the song (pp. 424–8); the section concludes with an allusion to 9 (*b*) (p. 429), and a reference to 24. Then on Sachs resuming (p. 431), we are once more in the atmosphere of 17 (p. 431), 18, and 2 (p. 432), with which the third scene closes.

Scene 4. This opens with the beautiful phrase from 16, already quite familiar from frequent use (p. 433), but soon to be succeeded by a new melody which begins

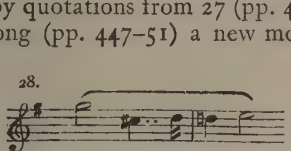
27.



and, taking to itself three more notes, continues to be heard for a considerable time (pp. 433–9), with

occasional reminiscences of 17 (p. 435). After some time, 20 (p. 437) is made use of, but soon gives place to 25 (p. 438), and then Walther sings the third verse of the Prize song (pp. 439–42), the accompaniment, in this case, consisting very largely of broken chords and sweeping arpeggi. At its conclusion we are carried back to 22 (*a*) and (*b*) (p. 443), which is now accompanied by rushing figures on the strings, and now 21 is heard again in familiar company—against 22 (*a*) and (*b*) given out by the horns, interrupted occasionally by quotations from 27 (pp. 445–7). Then with Eva's song (pp. 447–51) a new motive is introduced :

28.



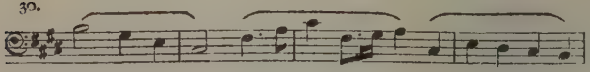
on which it is constructed, while at its close a famous phrase from the overture to *Tristan and Isolda* makes its appearance (p. 452) :

29.

After this there is a reminiscence of 27 (p. 453), which serves to introduce the theme of the chorale at the opening of the first act, but, before it has proceeded very far, a version of 1 is heard in the minor in the bass (p. 454). Presently snatches of 1 combine with the chorale tune (p. 457), and then a short sequence bears us along to one of the most beautiful quintets ever written (pp. 459–63), in which the opening phrase of the Prize song is most prominently heard. This should be studied not only for the charm of its melodic outline, but also for the glory of its polyphonic achievements. Soon, however, the score is a patch-

work of quotations from 18 (pp. 464–6), but before it gets under way a motive is heard (p. 464), which only occurs on three other occasions throughout the work (pp. 368, 507, and 563), but in each case the accompaniment is so subsidiary that the motive is easily recognized :

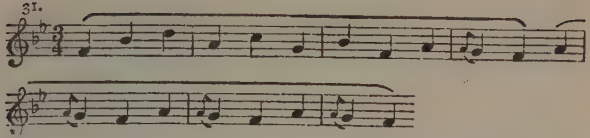
30.



Horns and trumpets are heard sounding alternately from the stage (pp. 465, 466), and these in turn give place to 1 which is given out very deliberately in the bass against rushing upward scales on the strings (pp. 466, 467).

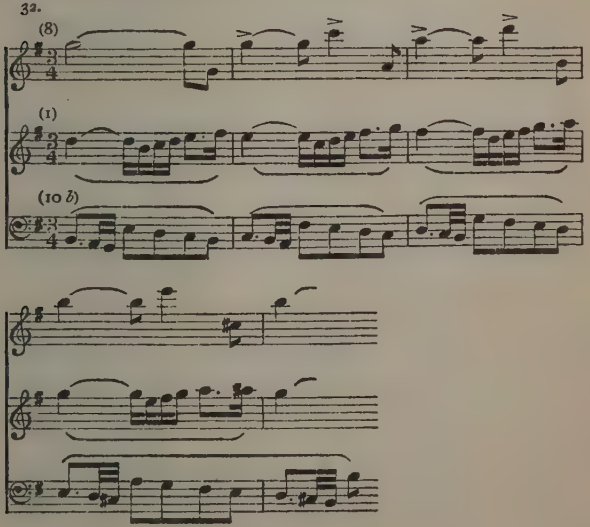
Scene 5. This opens with the shoemakers' song to St. Crispin, their patron saint (pp. 468–72), the accompaniment in parts being very suggestive of the refrain to Sachs's song (p. 263); at the conclusion of this the town watchman and others appear to the accompaniment of trumpets, drums, and toy instruments. These soon give place to the tailors (p. 474), the bakers (p. 479), and the shoemakers (p. 481), each company singing its own appropriate song. Then, after several allusions to 11 (pp. 482, 483), the music breaks off into a sprightly dance rhythm (pp. 484–8), and keeps it up until the sonorous strains of 1 are heard once more on the bass (pp. 488–91). This is succeeded by 3 (pp. 491 et seq.), which is conspicuous for some time until the jubilant melody of the people's song is heard, already quoted in 25, which, however, on the approach of Sachs, bursts into a paean of homage (p. 498) with 1, and subsequently 3, accompanying it :

31.



Sachs's song now recalls many motives already well known, and especially associated with him. First 22 (*a*) and (*b*) (p. 500), then a variation of 15 (p. 501) and 10 (*b*) alternating the one with the other (pp. 501–8), with a good deal of 1 running throughout. Presently the familiar 11 emerges on the top for a few bars, with 10 (*a*) forming a counterpoint to it (p. 503). This is followed by a remarkable combination of the three motives 8, 1, and 10 (*b*), with slight alterations in each (p. 503):

32.



Soon 8 drops out, and the other two motives pursue their course through a passage which fully exemplifies Wagner's skill as a contrapuntist of the first order. Next, the opening phrase of 18 is heard sandwiched between upward rushes in sixths on the strings (p. 506); after this, with 18 continuing to be heard in the treble, 30 is given out in a new rhythm by horns and bassoons (p. 507). Then there comes another of those brilliant combinations of motives for which the composer is so consistently remarkable, in this case of 10 (*a*) and 11, only to be followed by yet another, that of part of 1 with 10 (*a*), the latter still confining itself to the bass (p. 507). After this there is a repetition of the skilful device quoted in 32 (p. 507), and from this we pass to versions of 12 and the 'chalk' motive, each, as it were, commenting on the other (p. 509). These in their turn give place to a sprightly version of 1 in the treble and a reminiscence of the refrain to Sachs's song (in Act II, Scene 5) in the bass (p. 510). With this combination the music works up to a climax, which is heralded by the reappearance of horns and trumpets (p. 511). Then as the apprentices lead Beckmesser to a small mound of turf in front of the platform, 1 is heard again in its lightest and merriest vein, which again, as so often before, is worked up to a climax (p. 512). Presently the Apprentice phrase softly emerges from the bass strings and combines with 1 in a thrilling episode (pp. 512–15). Now while the apprentices are calling for silence, 3 is given out softly by the orchestra (pp. 515–16) with striking effect, for hitherto this motive has always been associated with sonority and power. Then with a brief hint of 12 (p. 517) we are once more listening to Beckmesser's antics on the lute and his oft-repeated song (p. 517). But he has 'bitten off more than he can chew', for he has been endea-

vouring to commit the Prize song to memory, and the result is that not only do words and music agree even less than they did at the 'rehearsal', but he has hopelessly confused the melodies of the two songs, his own and Walther's; the effect could not be more ludicrous. After singing the first few bars, he is interrupted by his fellow master-singers and the crowd, while 12 is heard a good deal of in the accompaniment (pp. 518, 519). Presently he gets going again (p. 520), only to be interrupted once more (p. 521). The grotesque orchestral accompaniment with its breathless snatches from the strings and petulant tremolos, the reappearance of 22 (*a*), and glimpses of 12, are features of this episode of the score which are worthy of attention (p. 520). The 'chalk' motive is now heard again alternating with 12 (pp. 521, 522). Once more Beckmesser is allowed to proceed, but with even greater failure than before (pp. 525, 526), as his mind becomes more and more confused. At the end of the song the music, like the people, breaks out into mocking laughter (p. 525) in a series of downward chromatic figures, which soon, however, give place, first to 14, and then to simple tonic and dominant harmony, in a sequence which has already become familiar by its very simplicity (p. 411). Soon we are back again to the chromatic figures (pp. 527, 528). Then as Sachs sings, 11 is given some imitative work to do (p. 529), and afterwards well-known phrases follow one another in quick succession: two notes from 12 (p. 530), a quotation from the Prize song (pp. 531, 533), several allusions to 1 (p. 532), further reminiscences of 12 (p. 533), references to 13 (*c*) (p. 534), other hints of 12 (pp. 534, 535), and echoes of the ascending phrase (pp. 536, 537). Then, at last, the Prize song—the

climax of the whole, is reached (p. 538). This song is worthy of study for the beauty of the melodic outline alone; indeed there are few songs which have established such a world-wide reputation as this, with its rich harmonies and haunting cadences, and it is not at all likely that posterity will condemn the verdict of this generation.

The choral work forming the interludes (pp. 540, 541) is remarkable for the disposition of the thirteen parts of which it is composed, while above it all steal gently on the ear fragments from the song itself.

In the second stanza (p. 542) the accompaniment moves more rapidly, and the harmonies are more elaborate as the content of the words grows more passionate. Yet another stanza is added (p. 545), with still greater elaboration of the accompaniment, but here the chorus enters very softly before its close, doubling the orchestral parts (p. 547), and then at its close reaches its last refrain (pp. 550–3). The song and chorus finished, we hear an allusion to 22 (*a*) (p. 534), and then we are carried speedily away to the music of jubilant triumph (p. 555), from which emerge, first 1, followed quickly by 3 (pp. 556, 557), and then 3 alternating with a phrase from 2 (p. 557). Now 1 is heard alone, given out in unison, and then in combination with the Prize song (pp. 559–60). Presently 3 chimes in again (p. 560) and is followed uninterruptedly by 1 (p. 561), which works up to its usual climax (p. 562). Then all three are presented together in the same stupendous combination with which they appeared in the overture (6). Yet once again (p. 564) 3 is sounded forth in all its fullness and grandeur, to the accompaniment of rushing figures on the strings, and then 1 (p. 568), with the Apprentice phrase 'dancing' attendance on it until the curtain falls, the opera concluding with the same strain in which it began.

'THE MUSICAL PILGRIM'

Edited by Dr. Arthur Somervell

DEBUSSY *and* RAVEL

BY

F. H. SHERA, M.A., Mus.M. (Cantab.), F.R.C.O.
Director of Music, Malvern College

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CLAUDE ACHILLE DEBUSSY . . 1862–1918.
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INTRODUCTION

THE present booklet can claim to be no more than a partial and superficial introduction to the works of the two composers with whom it professes to deal. Its size precludes more than the mention of *Pelléas et Mélisande* or of *L'Heure Espagnole*; of *La Mer*, the *Trois Nocturnes*, the *Rapsodie Espagnole* or the *F major Quartet*; of the many beautiful songs which we owe to the pens of both Debussy and Ravel. Its scope has been limited to a few representative works by each composer, easily accessible in one form or another. All anthologies are arbitrary; but it is hoped that the choice here made will at least be of service in promoting interest and further study.

To attempt to fix the place of either Debussy or Ravel in the musical firmament is a task for which the time is not yet ripe. One is but lately dead; the other, happily, is still with us. But little has yet been written in England of the outlook or methods of either, despite the interest which the more popular works of each is awakening with increasing power year by year.

Biographical details are omitted, for they are apt to be misleading. More than one composer seems to have found in music a refuge from sordid circumstances, material or other. Yet every artist is in some sort the child of his age; and Debussy and Ravel are no less typical than the poets and painters among whom they have lived. The student of aesthetics will find many instructive analogies if he chooses to

hunt for them ; but to attempt even a cursory survey of recent tendencies in French art would make too great a demand on available space ; and the following remarks will be confined to matters which bear a specific relation to music, though they have many points of contact with the other arts.

The French language at its best (say in the prose of Anatole France) is like the Greek in combining to a remarkable degree subtlety of meaning with clearness of statement. And the first impression given by the music of Debussy and Ravel is that it is in this respect the counterpart of their native tongue. Their intentions are always perspicuous; but, whereas Debussy's preference runs towards a mysterious cloudiness of effect, Ravel rejoices in high lights and sharp contours. Exceptions are to be found in the works of both: few things are more full of sunlight than Debussy's *Poissons d'Or* or *Les Collines d'Anacapri*; while the *Prélude à la Nuit* of Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole* is as impressionistic as any Whistler Nocturne. But in the main Debussy's temperament is negative, Ravel's positive.

Both are writers of programme-music ; in other words, both delight in choosing subjects from the external world, though Ravel's manner of treating them differs widely from that of Debussy. And the differences are interesting to trace.

In the choice of external subjects both range widely: Debussy from pre-history (*L'Après-Midi*) to the present day (*Minstrels*), Ravel from a Greek fairy-tale (*Daphnis et Chloé*) of perhaps the fifth century A. D. to the parody of a Viennese waltz (*La Valse*). It would probably be fair to say that in selecting antique subjects Debussy inclines to the medieval (*Pelléas*,

La Cathédrale), while Ravel has found congenial subjects in folk-lore (*Ma Mère l'Oye*, *Daphnis*). Such a contrast may seem hardly sharp enough to deserve mention, but it certainly exists.

In the choice of subjects from contemporary life they seem to draw closer. Spain they both love; *La Soirée dans Grenade* and the *Rapsodie Espagnole* are sufficient testimony of affection; Paris, again, shows its appeal in *Jardins sous la Pluie* and in *Jeux d'Eau*.

In outlook, however, the difference between them is marked. In a word, it is hard not to feel that Debussy is often possessed by a brooding, almost Virgilian, sadness for the 'lacrimae rerum'. To Ravel such an attitude means little or nothing. Keen-witted, rather inhuman—there is a good deal of Puck in him.

This difference removes both as far from the romanticism of Wagner as from the realism of Strauss. But where Debussy turns to mysticism and views the world from some remote seclusion, Ravel seems to come close to it, open-eyed and unafraid. Mysticism does not attract him; nor does emotion, though he touches the fringe of it in the *Pavane* and in *Le Jardin Féerique*. In their place we find the merry wit and irony of *L'Heure Espagnole* and of the *Histoires Naturelles*.

Another difference might be broadly stated by saying that Debussy's conceptions are dramatic, Ravel's static. This fact may find some explanation in their attitude to the forms of classical music. Ravel welcomes them, and in at least one instance (*Jeux d'Eau*) uses a classical form for which the subject seems to make little demand. But put his antique statue of the 'Dieu fluvial' beside Debussy's

goldfish in *Poissons d'Or*. The one depicts a state of rest; the other a state of movement, rising even to turbulence. Is it not singularly fitting that Ravel should mould his work into a standard form, as that Debussy's 'form' should be a mere sequence of ideas?

Debussy, as the *String Quartet* shows, finds classical form a nuisance, and prefers to spin his stories each to its own pattern. Now the essence of classical form is repetition according to a pre-arranged plan; Debussy's repetitions are determined on principles of his own, and the wholly satisfying results he obtains show him a master of construction. Ravel seems to look to the form first, to the idea second; and the natural effect which he rarely fails to achieve shows an equal mastery from his own standpoint.

This mastery of craft embraces not only the whole, but every part. All the resources of colour—melodic, harmonic, and instrumental—are handled by both with the consummate skill which gives an appearance of ease to what is really the result of the most careful balancing of alternatives. Neither works often on a large canvas; both are essentially miniaturists; but their miniatures are works of an exquisite and fragile delicacy in which every detail will bear close examination.

The imaginative quality united to this technique is equally high; but it is not to be defined in words; for, as no two men are alike, it will find a different response in every listener.

That Debussy and Ravel are men of a rarely sensitive temperament is apparent in every bar they write; study of the influences under which they seem to have written and of the methods each employs to express his highly individual personality in terms of music will do something to explain the peculiar

quality of the charm exercised by their works. If this book is a help to such study, it will have achieved its object, which is not to tell the listener what to think, but to give him some material for forming his own conclusions.

For much helpful suggestion throughout, acknowledgements are due to the study of Debussy by M. Laloy; and to that of Ravel by M. Roland Manuel. A full bibliography will be found in the new *Dictionary of Modern Music and Musicians*, which has appeared since the MS. of this little book went to the printer; and two valuable contributions to the study of modern music have been published even more recently—George Dyson's *The New Music*, and Cecil Gray's *A Survey of Contemporary Music*. The former deals chiefly with technique; the latter with aesthetics, and gives Debussy and Ravel a chapter apiece.

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Harmony and other technical devices.

A BOOK of this size can make no pretensions to deal fully with the expansion of harmonic possibilities seen in these two composers; but a few simple indications may serve to dispel some of the bewilderment of students meeting this type of music for the first time; just as an elementary knowledge of formal principles is invaluable as a guide through the work of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven or later symphonists.

However experimental or revolutionary a composer may seem at the outset, it will eventually be found that his innovations are, after all, only the logical development of resources already explored. *Natura nihil facit per saltum.* The experiments of one age, again, become the normal stock-in-trade of the next.

So it is here. There are few of the harmonic idioms of Debussy and Ravel which cannot be traced to their predecessors. Chopin wrote successions of major thirds, Moussorgsky, Glinka, and Dargomysky used the scale of whole tones.

This is inevitable for two reasons, as M. Lenormand has pointed out. Composers must be trained on the practice of their forerunners, for *ex nihilo nihil fit.* Again, they must make themselves intelligible to their audience; and, to do so, they must find at least some points of contact with their audience's previous experience.

For these reasons it will be convenient as well as desirable to explain the new in terms of the old; and it will be presumed that readers of this chapter are familiar with the 'classical' harmonic system of standard text-books.

While the dissection of harmonies is often interesting, it must never be forgotten that the aesthetic

side of music—its appeal to the emotions—is infinitely more important than its appeal to the intellect. 'Nothing is wrong which *sounds* right,' said Schumann. The ear, not the eye, is the final judge; so much so, indeed, that we have only to write out a scale of whole tones through two octaves to see the ordinary notation break down at once.

Scales.

Roughly speaking, from 1600 to 1900 two scales were in use for melodic and harmonic purposes: the major and minor (in its three forms—'harmonic', 'melodic ascending', and 'melodic descending'—the old Aeolian Mode). But before 1600 the ecclesiastical Modes—themselves based on Greek scales—provided a far greater variety. The details of them are to be found in many text-books. The points to be remembered about them are (1) that no Mode possesses a leading-note, and (2) that no two Modes have the same order of tones and semitones.

Although the Modes have been kept alive in the plain-chant of the Roman Church and used occasionally by composers for special effects (e.g. Beethoven's *Theme in the Lydian Mode*), their frequent employment by the French schools of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is worthy of note as an extension of technical resource. For examples see the opening of Debussy's *String Quartet* (Phrygian), and *Suite Bergamasque*, p. 7, bars 1 and 2 (Dorian); and the first few bars of Ravel's *Sonatine* (Aeolian). All these are seven-note scales.

The Pentatonic Scale has five notes, as its name implies, and omits both subdominant and leading-

note. Chopin uses it in the right-hand part of the well-known 'Black-note' Study (Op. 10, No. 5); Debussy in *Pagodes*, and Ravel in *Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes* (*Ma Mère l'Oye*, No. 3)—both the latter, obviously, in order to suggest a Chinese atmosphere. This use is perhaps characteristic of our composers,[1] for others have employed the scale without any special significance—e.g. Chopin as above, and Wagner in the opening phrase of the Rhine-maidens' Song (*Das Rheingold*, Sc. 1). It is a folk-song scale, western as well as eastern; but western ears are so habituated to the chord of the dominant seventh, of which the omitted notes form the essential constituents, that the use of the scale to suggest an oriental effect is quite convincing.

But the most characteristic scale used by Debussy (with Ravel it is rare) is the 'Organ-tuner's Scale' of six whole tones, thus—C, D, E, F♯, G♯, A♯. It is more than probable that we ought to regard it as a chord rather than a scale, and its very interesting chordal properties will be considered later. Debussy conceived it to be his mission in music to explore its possibilities; and so thoroughly did he do so that he left little or nothing new to be done with it by his successors.

These possibilities, however, are severely limited. Having no semitones to give it definite shape, the whole-tone scale has either no tonic or six tonics, which is much the same thing. And whereas the major, minor, and ecclesiastical modes have twelve possible transpositions (i.e. each of them can begin on any of the twelve semitones in the octave), the whole-tone scale has only two: we can have the series beginning on C or the series beginning on C♯;

[1] But cf. Ravel, *Jeux d'Eau*, p. 7, bar 4.

as soon as we move up to D, we find ourselves in the C-series again, and so on. For the whole-tone scale see Debussy, *L'Après-Midi*, score p. 9, bar 1 (pf. arrangement p. 4, bar 4); *La Soirée dans Grenade*, p. 2, bars 1–4.

Chords.

Play the seven notes of any ordinary scale or mode simultaneously, and the result is unpleasant; play the six notes of the whole-tone scale together, and the result is far smoother, owing to the absence of semitone-dissonances. When the notes are well spaced vertically (e. g. reading upwards, E, A♯, D, G♯, C, F♯), the effect is still smoother.

The whole-tone chord is one of the fruits of the system of Equal Temperament. Voices, stringed instruments, and slide trombones can modify their sounds, making A♭ different from G♯, for instance. When not combined with instruments having a fixed scale, they can produce the sounds of the pure scale. Hence the peculiarly smooth quality of good unaccompanied singing, or of a string quartet, or string orchestra. In the pure scale every interval is mathematically in tune, as will be understood by reference to any standard work on Acoustics. On the piano or any other instrument with fixed sounds the octaves are in tune, every other sound being slightly sharp or flat. The present system of tuning the piano (which we owe to John Sebastian Bach), by which the octave is divided into twelve equal semitones, may have disadvantages to ears trained in the pure scale; but these are easily outweighed by the advantage of absolute freedom of modulation which the system confers. In a full orchestra equal temperament is inevitable,

owing to the presence of instruments with non-modifiable sounds; and, while we may readily admit the superlative beauty of playing or singing which is 'dead in tune' according to the pure scale, we must confess that the range of that scale is limited compared with that of music written under the assumption of Equal Temperament.

Taking the system of Equal Temperament for granted, let us examine the twelve semitones of the octave. Twelve is equally the product of 4×3, 3×4, or 6×2. Four minor thirds (each of three semitones) placed one above the other give us the chord of the diminished seventh; three major thirds (each of four semitones) give us the chord of the augmented fifth; while six whole tones constitute the whole-tone chord.

The composers of the nineteenth century discovered that the chord of the diminished seventh was invaluable for purposes of modulation. Enharmonic change being a matter of mere paper alteration, any of the three diminished seventh chords could be made to belong to any key, as part of the minor ninth chord on either the dominant, supertonic, or tonic of the key. For instance, the chord D♯, F♯, A, C, may be introduced as part of the dominant harmony in the key of E (with B as the implied root). You can then modulate to B or A by quitting the chord as part of the tonic or supertonic ninth respectively; both without alteration. Alter C to B♯, and the root becomes either the dominant of C♯, the supertonic of F♯, or the tonic of G♯. All these modulations can be made to minor keys as well as major ones, and there is no need to pursue the point further. Each of the four notes in the chord has two names; each of the possible forms can belong to three keys,

so that we are confronted with a veritable *embarras de richesses*.

The trick was exploited by Liszt as much as by any one, and Verdi is said to have grown so tired of hearing it that he warned his pupils against it. The nineteenth century had discovered that the chord of the diminished seventh was really 'neutral ground' (as Sir Walford Davies calls it) common to all the twenty-four keys; the twentieth century took the further step of showing that the chord of the augmented fifth and the whole-tone chord were of precisely the same order; the former, indeed, being a part of the latter. Like the chord of the diminished seventh, each of them divides the octave into equal parts; notation is a matter of convenience and simplicity; you may use these pieces of neutral ground either to modulate or, if you will, to keep your audience poised in an atmosphere of keylessness. For the whole-tone chord see the passages cited for the scale on p. 12, and Ravel, *Ma Mère l'Oye*, score p. 15, bars 6, 7.

While the use of the whole-tone chord by Debussy is the principal 'chordal' innovation to be considered, one or two other devices may be mentioned. The interval of the second is sometimes added to a chord for its own sake, as in

Debussy, *The Golliwog's Cake-Walk* (from *Children's Corner*), p. 1, bar 6;

Debussy, *La Cathédrale Engloutie* (from *Préludes*, Livre 1er), p. 5, bar 9;

Ravel, *Jeux d'Eau*, p. 3, bar 1 (the E's).[1]

Ravel, moreover, shows a predilection for the chord

[1] The theoretical explanation may be the sounding of an appoggiatura with its note of resolution. A like explanation may account for the added sixth in Debussy's *Poissons d'Or*, p. 6, bar 4.

of the major seventh seen frequently in *Jeux d'Eau* and elsewhere.

It will thus be seen that the actual additions to the previous melodic and harmonic vocabulary made by these composers were few; but their importance is increased by the fact that novelties of idiom preponderate in their work, and are very largely responsible for its characteristic colouring. Nor will it escape notice that the 'novelties' of idiom are in the main extensions, rather than contradictions, of previous practice.

Consecutives.

In the use of parallel progressions ('consecutives') the habits of Debussy and Ravel differ widely from those of their predecessors. The 'classical' composers (or the theorists who reduced their methods to a system) frowned upon consecutive perfect fifths between any two parts, consecutive fourths with the lowest moving part, consecutive seconds, sevenths, and ninths. Consecutive major thirds moving by whole tones were prohibited in the contrapuntal era before 1600; but the major-minor period of 1600–1900 used the 'harmonic' form of the minor scale for its chords, so that the only pair of consecutive major thirds (found over the dominant and submediant) in that scale moved by semitones; the major thirds over the subdominant and dominant of the major scales were ignored.

Most of these limitations were outstepped at one time or another. Consecutive fifths with the bass are frequent in piano-writing; the Loge-motif in *The Ring* consists of a string of consecutive fifths (moving by semitones) between the two highest parts; Bach wrote consecutive fourths with the

lowest moving part even on his death-bed (in the Prelude on the Chorale *Vor Deinen Thron*), and so on. But the general practice of composers avoided these parallel progressions; and consecutive seconds, sevenths (except diminished ones, which are enharmonically equivalent to major sixths), and ninths, if they occur, seem to be the result of either experiment or accident.

Under the old system of *organum* (before 1400) phrases were harmonized in successions of fifths or fourths. The use of this device, as of the medieval Modes, by two composers otherwise so 'modern' in idiom, is an interesting example of the meeting of extremes. A few representative instances may be cited.

Consecutive Fifths:

With the bass—

Debussy, *Prélude de la Damoiselle Élue*, bar 1.

Ravel, *Sonatine*, bars 1, 2, 13–15.

Between upper parts—

Debussy, *Poissons d'Or*, p. 3, bars 1, 2.

Ravel, *Jeux d'Eau*, p. 3, bars 3, 4.

Consecutive Fourths:

Debussy, *Jardins sous la Pluie*, bars 8-15.

„ *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, bar 1.

Ravel, *Jeux d'Eau*, p. 8, bars 1, 2, 6; p. 12, bars 1, 2.

Major Thirds.

If the whole-tone scale is played in thirds, all these thirds are major. Successions of major thirds proceeding by whole tones are seen in

Debussy, *La Danse de Puck* (*Préludes*, Livre 1er), p. 3, bar 10 (written as diminished fourths);

Ravel, *Ma Mère l'Oye*, score p. 38, bars 1–3, 9, 10.

Progressions of major thirds proceeding by semitones or tones (the older technique used the diatonic notes of the key or chromatic minor thirds) are seen in

Debussy, *String Quartet*, p. 33, bars 11, 12 (1st violin and violoncello);

Debussy, *Jardins sous la Pluie*, p. 5, bars 9, 10 (L. H. part);

Ravel, *String Quartet*, p. 3, bars 8–10;

„ *Jeux d'Eau*, p. 4, bar 4.

Seconds.

Successions of seconds are seen in

Debussy, *Et la Lune descend*, bars 1, 2. (Theme harmonized in fourths and fifths, or in fifths with 'added seconds');

Ravel, *Ma Mère l'Oye*, score p. 15, bars 5, 6. (Both the seconds are part of the whole-tone chord);

Ravel, *Rapsodie Espagnole*, score p. 1, bars 4, 5.

Sevenths.

Successions of chords of the seventh, in various forms and positions, are seen in

Debussy, *La Soirée dans Grenade*, p. 1, bars 17–20;

„ *1ère Arabesque*, p. 2, bars 18–20;

„ *Sarabande* (Pour le Piano), p. 12, bar 11;

„ *Poissons d'Or*, p. 10, bar 6;

„ *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, p. 4, bars 7, 8;

Ravel, *Jeux d'Eau*, p. 1, bars 4–6 (L.H. part);

„ *Rapsodie Espagnole*, *Habanera*, bars 1–6, &c. ($\frac{4}{2}$).

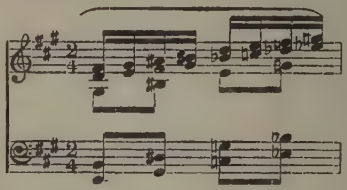
Ninths.

Debussy, *Nuages*, pf. arrt., p. 1, bar 14.

Ravel, *Sonatine*, p. 2, bars 6–10.

„ *Pavane*, p. 2, bars 14, 15.

The following bars from Debussy's *Chansons de Bilitis* are a compendium of consecutives. Major thirds, fifths, sevenths, ninths, and the whole-tone scale are all exemplified:



Under this section mention should perhaps be made of the very frequent doubling of a melody in the *lower* octave—as opposed to the ordinary doubling in the octave above. For example see

Debussy, *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, p. 1, bars 1, 3, &c.;
Debussy, *La Soirée dans Grenade*, p. 1, bars 17–20;
Ravel, *Sonatine*, p. 1, bars 1–4;
„ *Ma Mère l'Oye*, score p. 6, bars 7–11.

Pedals.

Pedals, whether in the bass or elsewhere, are a prominent feature of this technique, and students will have no difficulty in discovering examples for themselves; but attention may be drawn to the C♯ Pedals in the two Habanera movements—Debussy's *La Soirée dans Grenade* and the *Habanera* of Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole*, as well as to the long Pedal chord in Debussy's *La Danse de Puck*, p. 3, bar 15—p. 4, bar 10.

A recurring figure, moreover, is sometimes used as a Pedal against a succession of changing harmonies:

Debussy, *Jardins sous la Pluie*, p. 5, last two bars; p. 7 (a shake).
Debussy, *Préludes*, Livre 2me, p. 8, bar 5 onwards.
Debussy, *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, p. 4, bar 17 onwards (a 'decorated' Pedal).
Ravel, *Jeux d'Eau*, p. 8, bars 1–3, &c.

Miscellaneous.

Unessential notes (passing notes, *appoggiature*, suspensions, &c.) there is no space to consider, while discussions of Tonality would be necessarily elaborate and probably futile. It may be remarked that the adjective 'elusive' so often applied to this music when it was new to English ears was probably the fruit of (*a*) its liberal use of notes and chords which seemed to demand 'resolution', and (*b*) the 'keyless' effect of the whole-tone chord.

There is, however, one device of the older technique, beloved of Bach, which finds much favour with Debussy and is not ignored by Ravel. This is the use of the tonic seventh or ninth, whether inducing a modulation to the subdominant key or not. Examples are

Debussy, *Suite Bergamasque*, *Prélude*, p. 1, bars 9, 10;
Debussy, *Pagodes*, p. 1, bars 5, 6;
Ravel, *Sonatine*, p. 10, bars 14–24.

The point which differentiates its use from the common one, in a *Coda*, is that it comes early in a movement or part of a movement. The characteristic 'flat' seventh is also, of course, a modal feature.

Many harmonic 'turns' have been enumerated; but the reader should not therefore carry away the

impression that contrapuntal interest is altogether absent, or that either Debussy or Ravel is deficient in contrapuntal skill. The part-writing in much of Debussy's *Prélude à 'L'Après-Midi d'un Faune'*; of the last movement of the *String Quartet*; of *La Soirée dans Grenade* (p. 5); of Ravel's *Sonatine* (p. 8, bars 12–17); and of *Ma Mère l'Oye* (score pp. 1–3, 40–42) is evidence of the contrary. Contrapuntal writing is more frequently seen in Ravel than in Debussy.

In their piano-works, moreover, both tend to shun extended melodies, and prefer to construct themes out of repeated phrases of one or two bars. In some instances the subject invites such treatment; in others (e. g. Ravel's *Sonatine*) it does not, and the effect is thereby weakened. This preference is due possibly to the piano's lack of sustaining power; at any rate it is much less prominent in works for instruments, whether strings or wind, which are capable of sustained tone.

Rhythmic freedom leads to the use of such time-signatures as $\frac{15}{8}$ (Debussy, *String Quartet*, p. 24), $\frac{6}{8}\ \frac{3}{4}$ (Ravel, *String Quartet*, p. 14), and $\frac{5}{8}$ (ibid., p. 34). More elaborate alternations of bar-values are found throughout Debussy's *L'Après-Midi* and the Slow Movement (III) of Ravel's *String Quartet*; while at p. 2, bars 7–10 of the same work we have two bars of $\frac{3}{2}$ barred as three of $\frac{4}{4}$. Conflicting rhythms are also frequent.

To trace the musical parentage of Debussy and Ravel would be a task too elaborate for such a book as this; but it may be said that the influence of Erik Satie has been acknowledged by both; and that both Liszt and César Franck practised the transformation of themes seen in Debussy's *String Quartet* and Ravel's *Sonatine*. Both, again, owe much to the Russian

composers of the nineteenth century; while the orchestration of Ravel is said to be under peculiar obligations to that of Rimsky-Korsakoff (Roland Manuel, *Maurice Ravel et son œuvre*).

The foregoing sketch, rough as it is, should be sufficient to show the student the main constituents of the characteristic effects used by these composers, in so far as they are the result of technique. Should he care to pursue the subject more closely, M. Lenormand's *Étude sur l'Harmonie moderne* (Eschig, Paris, 1912; Eng. Trans. by H. Antcliffe, J. Williams) will provide all needful help and many examples (few of which are the same as those here given) drawn from a wide range of contemporary French composers.

The general principles, aesthetic and technical, which underlie the work of Debussy and Ravel have now been stated. It remains to see how they are exemplified in complete compositions. Should the analysis to which these delicate works have been subjected seem, as it will seem to some readers, unnecessarily minute, the excuse must be sought in the fact that only fine artistic work is susceptible of close analysis, and that the examination of details, if it is not allowed to obscure the total effect, will reveal much beauty that would otherwise lie unsuspected, and will unravel passages which at first sight (and hearing) may seem obscure. This at any rate has been the writer's experience.

The works chosen are as follows:

DEBUSSY.

Orchestra: *Prélude à 'L'Après-Midi d'un Faune'.*

Chamber Music: *Quartet for Strings*, Op. 10.

Piano: *Estampes:*
II. *La Soirée dans Grenade.*
III. *Jardins sous la Pluie.*
Images, 2me série:
III. *Poissons d'Or.*
Préludes, Livre 1er:
V. *Les Collines d'Anacapri.*
X. *La Cathédrale Engloutie.*
XI. *La Danse de Puck.*

RAVEL.

Orchestra: (originally for Pf. Duet) *Ma Mère l'Oye:*
I. *Pavane de la Belle au Bois Dormant.*
II. *Petit Poucet.*
III. *Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes.*
IV. *Les Entretiens de la Belle et de la Bête.*
V. *Le Jardin Féerique.*

Ballet: *Daphnis et Chloé* (*Fragments symphoniques*):
Nocturne—Interlude—Danse Guerrière.

Piano: *Pavane pour une Infante Défunte.*
Sonatine.
Jeux d'Eau.

DEBUSSY

Prélude à 'L'Après-Midi d'un Faune' (1893, *published* 1902).

L'Après-Midi d'un Faune is a poem by the symbolist, Stéphane Mallarmé. It is the monologue of a Faun (an antique nature-god, half-man, half-beast, with horns, goat's feet, and a tail), who lies drowsily on the sunlit slopes of Etna. The setting recalls the exquisite word-picture of Theocritus in his seventh Idyll, to which Tennyson was indebted when he wrote:

> For now the midday quiet holds the hill;
> The grasshopper is silent in the grass;
> The lizard, with his shadow on a stone,
> Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead.

It is, moreover, difficult not to think that poet or composer, perhaps both, drew some inspiration from the famous statue (the 'Barberini' Faun) in the Munich Glyptothek.

Heavy with slumbering in the noontide blaze, the Faun dreams of the Nymphs and Naiads he has pursued, and sometimes won—

> And soft as lips that laugh and hide
> The laughing leaves of the trees divide,
> And screen from seeing and leave in sight
> The god pursuing, the maiden hid.

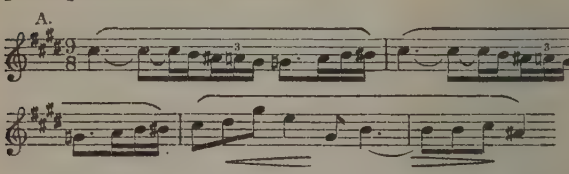
Imagination carries him along, until at last he pictures himself under the shadow of Etna with the very Goddess of Love in his arms. But the vision, he realizes, is impious, and invites Nemesis. He dismisses it and turns once more to drowsing amid the

murmur of the countryside and the haze and heat of summer.

The music is conceived in a spirit which is the very counterpart of its subject. We are in that age of the world's dawn when man's ignorance of scientific truth filled him with childlike wonder at things which to-day are commonplace, and set his imagination working to endow them with human or half-human attributes.

L'Après-Midi is scored for a small orchestra of 3 flutes, 2 oboes and cor anglais, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 harps, antique cymbals, and strings. References are to the miniature score (Jobert, 1922), but there is also an excellent piano-transcription by Leonard Borwick (Fromont, 1914). Sections omitted in the H. M. V. Record (D 130) are marked by an asterisk *.

(p. 1.) *Très modéré*, $\frac{9}{8}$. A flute enunciates the principal theme of the work—



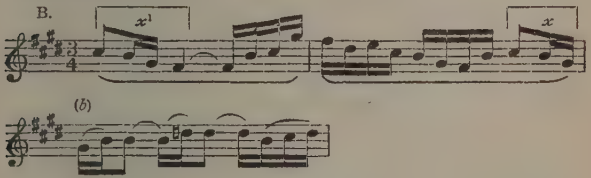
which begins with scale-wise passages taking a characteristic colour from their compass of a tritone (three whole tones). Oboes, clarinets and a horn respond, with a *glissando* on the harp; muted strings join in, and two horns 'croon' in phrases combining to evoke an impression of heat and slumber. The rhythm fluctuates between $\frac{9}{8}$, $\frac{6}{8}$, and $\frac{12}{8}$. [(p. 2) 3 bars *.]

The opening theme recurs, more fully orchestrated, and ending this time in a more compact and diatonic

version of itself. The scoring then becomes more tenuous and A is expanded into delightful arabesques, in which a second flute shares.

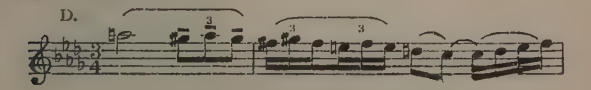
* (p. 8.) A new section may be said to begin with a clarinet solo, akin in matter to A, and heard against fragmentary notes from the harp, which suggest the rippling of water, crystal-clear, over the stones. This runs its course until *

(p. 10.) *En animant*, when the oboe enters with a new theme—



whose outline begins by recalling that of A with its down-and-up motion. Its third bar initiates a figure (*b*) which is at once seized by the violins, and the theme is carried to a climax. A *ritenuto* and * return to the original speed * [(p. 14) 4 bars *] introduce a new theme:

This is given out by wood-wind in octaves and accompanied by syncopated chords from the strings. A triplet-figure—



[1] *x* cf. with *y* in Ex. C.

leads to the repetition of C by the strings, accompanied by harp and wood-wind, the latter in a cross-rhythm ($\frac{9}{8}$, phrased in pairs of quavers). (*b*) and D (second bar) are used to build up the principal climax of the work. As it subsides, a solo violin beautifully recalls C, and we return to

* (p. 21.) *Mouvement du début.* Against sustained chords on the strings and arpeggios on the harps, A is heard; but it is pitched a third higher than at the opening, it is written in longer notes, and its range is now a perfect fourth instead of a tritone. It alternates twice with a passage suggestive of a fleeting vision of Nymphs, emphasized on repetition by harp-*glissandi.**

(p. 27.) As the vision passes, A is heard again at its original pitch and in its original form. It is combined with echoes of (*b*) and D against a shimmering background of string-tone and clarinets, while the faint notes of the tiny antique cymbals add a touch of brilliance. Again and again it is heard, gradually fading

> Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
> Up the hillside; and now 'tis buried deep
> In the next valley-glades.

(p. 31.) The last page of the score contains two unforgettable bars: the first with repeated phrases for the harps against full, soft chords for strings and horns; the second with its three-part echo of A—in range now reduced to a major third—for two horns and violins, over a low tonic played by half the double-basses. In three more bars all is over, and we may well exclaim, as did Keats when the nightin gale's song died into silence,

> Was it a vision or a waking dream?

With the possible exception of *De l'Aube à Midi sur la Mer*, *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* may well be accounted Debussy's masterpiece.

Quartet for Strings, Op. 10 (1893, *published* 1895).

Debussy's *String Quartet* dates from the same year as *L'Après-Midi*. Like Elgar and Ravel, Debussy has given only one String Quartet to the world; but it by no means follows that all three composers had the same reasons for so doing. With Elgar the reason is certainly not to be found in any inability to work on a large scale; rather is it that, when he wrote his *String Quartet*, *Violin Sonata*, and *Piano Quintet*, he seemed to have turned a mind always introspective to a still keener questioning of life's mystery; and to have found that self-expression came most easily in the intimacy of chamber music.

But Debussy and Ravel are essentially miniaturists; and a composer who delights in miniatures and produces them to perfection (Grieg is another case in point) is not likely to write many works in forms in which he is less assured of success.

Again, while the works of Debussy and Ravel excel in harmonic interest, it must be remembered that the string quartet is essentially a contrapuntal conception; and that it demands a subjective treatment which is in the main foreign to the objective outlook of our two composers.

And so Debussy's *Quartet*, skilful and beautiful though much of it is, does not achieve the level of many of his shorter works. To this statement an exception must be made in favour of the Slow Move-

ment, which, usually the hardest movement to write, possesses a serene beauty, giving it a high place in musical literature.

The work is dedicated to MM. Ysaye, Crickboom, Van Hout, and Jacob. References are to the miniature score (Durand).

I.

Animé et très décidé. C. G minor.

As in a Symphonic poem of Liszt, the same theme, in different shapes, is found in more than one movement. In the first movement its rhythm is this :

It is full of vigour ; and its melody and harmony, for two bars, belong to the Phrygian Mode.[1] In the third bar the harmony is modernized, and the orthodox bridge-passage begins with melodic phrases from the 1st Violin followed by the 'Cello, against fascinating successions of $\frac{6}{3}$ chords from the remaining instruments. At p. 3, bar 2, the first theme returns differently harmonized, and leads to the entry of the second subject (page 3, last bar).

This tranquil theme is almost entirely in the hands of the 1st Violin and Viola, with an accompaniment of triplets from the other instruments. The solo parts move frequently in ninths, afterwards (in a second section) taking to octaves, in which all but the 2nd Violin finally join. (As the first section of this

[1] Equivalent in the order of its tones and semitones to an octave of ' white ' notes, beginning on E.

subject is not used again, 'second subject' will now denote the second section only.)

The *Development* may be summarized as follows:

(p. 5, bar 10.) The first subject ('Cello) is answered by the second subject (1st Violin).

(p. 6, bar 10.) Emphatic statement of the first subject (Tutti).

(p. 6, bar 14.) The first subject (1st Violin) is more quietly treated, over a throbbing triplet accompaniment.

(p. 7, bar 2.) Imitative treatment of the second bar of the first subject.

(p. 7, bar 7.) Extended treatment of the second subject by the 1st Violin, 'Cello (p. 8, bar 1), and 1st Violin again (p. 8, bar 10), the triplet accompaniment being first in repeated notes, then (p. 8, bar 10) 'figured'.

(p. 9, bar 8.) A tempestuous climax of triplets in all the parts leads to entries of the first subject (Viola) at page 10, bar 3, over murmuring arpeggios ('Cello); and (p. 11, bar 3) a blended version of both subjects (1st Violin) introduces the

(p. 11, bar 9) *Recapitulation.* The most noteworthy feature of this section is the replacement of the original bridge-passage by a theme derived from the first subject (p. 12, bar 7). The first section of the second subject is also discarded; and the scoring, besides being full, is complicated by cross-rhythms. The *Coda* contains a reference to the second subject (p. 14, bar 8), but this soon gives way to a stormy passage in octaves ($\frac{6}{4}$, based on the first three notes of the first subject), with which the movement ends.

II.

Assez vif et bien rhythmé. $\frac{6}{8}$. G Minor.

The Scherzo is in Ternary form (A–B–A). Its material is simply the first subject of the first movement, which may be called the Motto, turned from $\frac{4}{4}$ into $\frac{6}{8}$.

A. After a few introductory bars the opening section presents the theme as a two-bar phrase played by the Viola, the other parts accompanying *pizzicato*, and frequently alternating groups of two notes with the normal three of the rhythm. At p. 17, bar 17, the 1st Violin doubles the Viola at the octave above, and at p. 18, bar 7, the theme passes to the 'Cello. The whole section is marked by great rhythmic vivacity.

B (p. 18, bar 14). Over a rippling semiquaver accompaniment (in E♭ major) the 1st Violin sings the theme in long notes, the 'Cello meanwhile keeping up the rhythm with tonic and dominant quavers, *pizzicato*. A few intermediate bars lead to a repetition (p. 19, bar 9) freshly harmonized, and beginning in C major. At p. 20, bar 11, there are references to the first section (A); and at p. 21, bar 16, the material of B is heard. (Notice the references to the Motto in the 1st Violin part.) A passage of diminished 5ths leads to the return of A at p. 24, bar 6.

A (G major). The outline of the theme is now transformed into $\frac{1}{8}^{5}$, and treated freely. At p. 25, bar 13, a brilliant effect is produced by the 'shakes' in the accompaniment. At p. 26, bar 6, the $\frac{6}{8}$ time is restored, and with reminiscences of B the movement closes.

As a whole this movement has a freakish, gnome-like character, and achieves the true spirit of the

Scherzo; but its rhythmic energy hardly compensates for the monotony with which its material is handled.

III.

Andantino doucement expressif. $\frac{6}{8}$. D♭ major.

The Slow Movement is without doubt the best of the four. Like the Scherzo, it is in three sections, of which the middle one is the most extended.

A. All the instruments are muted. Four bars of introduction lead to a beautiful melody, lusciously harmonized, with the inner parts frequently moving in 6ths.

B. At p. 28, bar 13, the key-signature changes to that of C♯ (D♭) minor, the time to $\frac{3}{8}$. The Viola announces a modal melody whose phrases are harmonized at the end by unexpected 5ths, with entrancing effect. At p. 29, bar 5, a two-part passage for the Violins leads to a melody given out by the Viola and taken up by the 'Cello (both now unmuted), under a swaying accompaniment of simple chords. At p. 30, bar 4, the 2nd Violin and 'Cello have the melody in octaves; sequences and increased activity in the accompaniment lead to the climax (p. 31, bar 1), where the theme is entrusted to the 1st Violin.

A. At p. 32, bar 7, the first theme returns in the original key and time, more fully scored; and the beautiful movement soon comes to an end.

Thematically the Slow Movement has little connexion with the rest of the work; the only reference to the Motto being the triplet in the theme of B.

IV

Très modéré. C. D♭ major. *En animant peu à peu.* $\frac{12}{8}$. *Très mouvementé.* ¢. G minor.

The last movement opens in a manner which

recalls the Finale of Beethoven's Choral Symphony. A cadenza for the 'Cello introduces an allusion to the Motto and to some of the rhythms of the first movement.

After a pause, at p. 35, bar 15 ($\frac{12}{8}$), there are undoubted reminiscences of the Scherzo, imitatively announced; and it is not until p. 35, bar 4, that the original key of G minor is resumed and the movement gets into its stride.

The main section begins with a theme—

which is initiated by the Viola and taken up by the 1st Violin over sustained chords. At p. 35, bar 16, it ends with a syncopated triplet, which is used imitatively to lead to a return of (*a*). The dotted-crotchet rhythm of (*a*)'s second bar now becomes prominent, first as an accompaniment to a theme in the Viola part (p. 36, bar 11), which inverts the first three notes of the Motto, and soon as part of the theme itself. Considerable use is now made of the foregoing material (with frequent 6ths in the accompaniment), theme (*a*) being heard in augmentation at p. 38, bar 8.

At p. 39, bar 15, the Motto appears, syncopated in long notes, which are shortened at p. 40, bar 10. As the tone increases (p. 41, bar 5) the outline of the Motto appears in the accompaniment, and at p. 41, bar 15, its augmented form is given to the 2nd Violin.

A climax comes at p. 42, bar 11. The 1st Violin has the Motto (in notes twice as long as before) against conflicting rhythms and a Viola *tremolando*.

The tone gradually subsides, and (*a*) returns, an augmented form of its second bar (p. 45, bar 1) leading to an emphatic statement of the Motto (p. 46, bar 1) in chords and in augmentation.

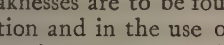
Previous material is now used again at some length, until (p. 49, bar 11) the Motto, as heard in the Scherzo, forms the groundwork of the final section (*Très vif*), and a rushing scale from the 1st Violin brings the work to a brilliant conclusion in G major.

This analysis is an attempt to point out the main features of interest in a movement whose energy carries it through with little that is definite in the way of form. The last movement is the most contrapuntal of the four; and while in no way fugal in construction is akin to a fugue in its continuity. Its chief weaknesses are to be found in the looseness of its construction and in the use of *tremolando*, an orchestral idiom of great power when produced by a body of strings, but ineffective on single instruments.

Works for Piano.

Estampes, ii. *La Soirée dans Grenade* (1903).

One of the finest of Debussy's compositions. It is built on the rhythm of the Habanera—



a Spanish dance familiar to lovers of Bizet's *Carmen*. The rhythm permeates the whole piece and is to be traced in almost every bar.

Though he can claim no knowledge of the picture in the composer's mind, the writer has always imagined it to be somewhat as follows.

The listener stands on a rocky, pine-clad hill above the town. Vague sounds of the Habanera are heard. The night-breezes murmur in the tree-tops (p. 1, bar 17). A tavern-door swings open, and the dance is heard at its height (p. 2, bar 16). The sounds die away as the door closes, but the rhythm goes on.

At the last line of p. 3, *avec plus d'abandon*, comes a sensuously-harmonized section based on rhythms employed earlier: the listener seems to ponder over his impressions. The wind sweeps through the trees (p. 4, last line), and echoes of the dance again reach the ear (p. 5, bar 2). Then, *léger et lointain*, some one thrums a mandoline, whose sound is interrupted twice by fragments of the section described above (p. 5, line 3). Very faintly the rhythm of the Habanera persists (p. 6, line 3, *mouvement du début*); the wind whispers once more (p. 6, bar 16), and the listener is at last conscious of nothing but the night and the stars.

Though perfectly satisfying on the piano, it is possible that *La Soirée* would have been even more beautiful in orchestral form. The masterly use, however, of the colour obtainable from the different registers of the piano should not escape notice.

Estampes, iii. *Jardins sous la Pluie* (1903).

Jardins sous la Pluie is one of the most deservedly popular of Debussy's piano works, though its imaginative level is a little less high than that of *La Soirée dans Grenade*. Even so, it has the fine delicacy of a landscape by Corot.

The scene seems to be the trim lawn of some Parisian garden. The rain patters quickly down in semiquavers, to the accompaniment of a sombre modal theme in the 'tenor' register of the keyboard. Is it

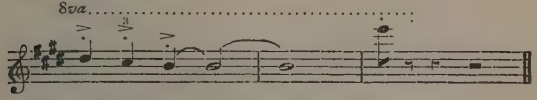
too fanciful to suggest that this theme typifies the clouds drifting over the sky? At bar 3 sustained notes in the bass add a gloomy heaviness to the impression. At p. 2 matters become worse, as the range of sounds gradually covers some three-and-a-half octaves.

A change to the major and the use of a higher register seem to indicate a gleam of sunlight; but at p. 3 it vanishes; and by the third line of this page the lawn seems saturated.

The key changes to C minor (p. 3, last line), and the sounds descend once more; but not for long. The range expands, speed and tone increase (p. 4, line 4); piercing harmonies and whole-tone scales culminate in seven bars of triplets (with broken chords), in which the bass climbs to the G sharp above the treble stave (p. 5, double bar), the treble swooping down to meet it. Wind and rain have done their worst.

As they subside, detached notes and phrases over a triplet accompaniment (p. 6) seem to represent the gradual cessation of the rain. The 'cloud' theme is heard at its original pitch, but in the major (p. 6, bar 9).

Then, at p. 7, bar 11, the wind rises again, and at p. 9, line 3, the sun breaks out of the mist in full glory. The 'cloud' theme and the pattering semiquavers are built into the climax, but now they are transfigured. The grass seems jewelled in the sunlight. The 'cloud' theme is heard, first a third, then a fifth higher than its original pitch. Its second bar is given four times, and finally expanded—

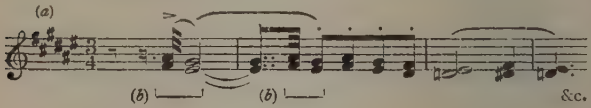


as the piece comes to a triumphant conclusion.

Images, 2me série, iii. *Poissons d'Or* (1907).

Another brilliantly descriptive piece, which almost explains itself. In *Jardins sous la Pluie* there was a certain dramatic element in the change from rain and cloud to sunshine and fair weather. The goldfish in the pool swim round and round, now slowly, now more quickly; from time to time one flashes past like a gleam of light; but at last they seek rest under the shadow of the stones, so that nothing is seen but the sunlit water, rippling under a passing breeze.

The piece begins with the sound of running water, and a theme in thirds—



enters, whose characteristic iambic (*b*) is like the flash of a fin. Arpeggios lead to and accompany a theme of descending notes (p. 2, bar 4), and (*b*) leads to a repetition of (*a*).

The next section (p. 4, bar 5) consists largely of chords in elaborate harmonic successions of sevenths and ninths, interspersed with falling arpeggios, which at p. 6, bar 4, are followed by echoes of the descending theme of p. 2.

At p. 7, bar 5, the movement becomes more animated. An upward rush of scales and a downward plunge of arpeggios introduce some curious alternations of seconds, varied occasionally by thirds. Then (p. 8, bar 7) the bass initiates a figure which is developed in sequences. At p. 10, bar 5, the sport reaches its height. The water swirls as the fish race madly round in the

confined space. But it is quickly over; (*a*) returns at p. 11, bar 5; the water becomes calmer; and a cadenza with a long *crescendo* and *diminuendo* brings it soon to rest.

Préludes (1910).

The two books of *Préludes* contain some charming pieces of descriptive music. The title of each is, curiously, placed at the end—perhaps because Debussy shrank from inviting a too literal interpretation on the part of his audience. The examples chosen are all from Book I.

V. *Les Collines d'Anacapri.*

A slow phrase like the sound of cowbells is answered by a snatch of the folk-song used later. The cowbells sound again; a *crescendo* leads to a repetition of the folk-song phrase; and, after two bars of accompaniment, the song proper begins, as if whistled by some sturdy countryman stepping briskly along a dusty mountain road. A few bars later the whistler takes to singing, and finally breaks forth into a hearty strain, marked *avec la liberté d'une chanson populaire.* The tune is heard first in the bass, then in the treble (the cowbells asserting themselves more than once); then in an inner part, as it dies away and gives place to a middle section, *modéré et expressif.*

This section has an interior melody, again song-like, accompanied by full harmonies of an unusually diatonic kind. At *retenu* (p. 5) the cowbells are heard again, first at their original speed, then twice as fast. The 'whistling tune' begins an octave higher than before; the cowbells interrupt it, but are caught up into its accompaniment, and the second tune of the first part returns. From *a tempo* (p. 7) fragments of the various tunes of the first part are bandied about,

but the cow-bell theme predominates. Five bars from the end another bell-like figure is combined with it, and the last three bars are simply a brilliant statement of the tonic chord with added sixth. They are marked *lumineux*, an adjective completely suited to the blazing sunlight in which the whole piece seems to be conceived.

X. *La Cathédrale engloutie.*

There is no sunlight about 'The Cathedral under the Waters'. It illustrates the Breton legend of the rising of the buried cathedral of Ys from the ocean depths, to which it subsequently sinks again. Musically, the piece is built upon two ideas—No. 1, which is foreshadowed at the opening, but is not heard in full until the last line of p. 2 (*sonore sans dureté*); No. 2, which occurs at bar 7 of the piece. No. 1 may be held to represent the plain-chant played by ghostly fingers on the organ of the cathedral. Its germ is a figure of three notes (D, E, B)—a second followed by a fifth. No. 2 is a grave melody in minims ($\frac{3}{2}$), whose significance is possibly the slow swelling of the sea in which the cathedral has been engulfed.

A few notes of No. 1, dimly heard *dans une brume doucement sonore*, rise three times through a ninth and remain, while the bass descends heavily, note by note, and a bare chord persists high up in the treble. The harmonies are archaic in their emptiness, built as they are of fourths and fifths, like the old *organum*. No. 2 appears, *doux et fluide*, against a simple pedal, both being 'doubled' in three octaves.

At bar 14, No. 1 is expanded to two bars in a full curve (rising and falling). Its first three notes are then developed, *peu à peu sortant de la brume*, in fuller harmony over a bass which constantly increases in

animation. A bell-like figure (p. 2, bar 8), heard first in the treble, is transferred to the bass, and a thunderous organ-pedal note brings the full presentation of No. 1. The fifth of the initial phrase is now reduced to a fourth, and a kinship between the two themes is thus established, for at three points No. 2 contains a second followed by a fourth; in No. 2, however, the phrase begins twice on the first beat, in No. 1 always on the second.

A short connecting passage leads to a repetition of No. 2, this time over, instead of across, a pedal; for which the third of the scale now replaces the tonic. Some interesting contrapuntal use is now made of the final phrase of No. 2, which is so closely akin to the opening phrase of No. 1. At the third line of p. 4 two bars of quavers begin a tonic pedal, which is then elaborated and continues to the end of the piece. No. 1 is heard in full, *comme un écho*, and the conclusion is much like the beginning, though the upward-curving fragment of No. 1 has its bareness a little relieved by the addition of seconds to the harmonies.

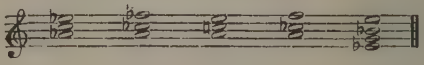
Like *Pelléas*, *La Cathédrale engloutie* is an excellent example of Debussy's remote mysticism of outlook referred to in the Introduction.

XI. *La Danse de Puck.*

The Preludes show Debussy's genius in many varied lights. *Les Collines d'Anacapri* may be compared to a landscape, *La Cathédrale engloutie* to a vision, while *La Danse de Puck* is sheer fantasy of the most ethereal delicacy; Mendelssohn, no mean delineator of fairies, is heavy-handed by comparison with Debussy. *La Danse de Puck* derives, of course, from Shakespeare (*A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, Act II, Sc. i), and a reading of the dialogue between Puck and the Fairy

will do more to aid appreciation of the music than any analysis.

An unaccompanied theme of six bars, ending with a whimsical displacement of rhythm, leads to chords of the major ninth (with flattened third and fifth) in arpeggios. At p. 3, bar 3, a tune seems promised, but is quickly discarded, as is its successor, which recalls the rhythm of the opening theme. At bar 15, however, a pedal is established on a chord of the seventh, within which a sustained melody (harmonized mainly in chords of the sixth) is woven. At p. 4, bar 7, a new figure occurs, leading to what surely represents the fate of 'the wisest aunt' (p. 5, bar 1). At bar 5 the first theme appears harmonized, and is carried through various modulations. The interior figure in the last line of the page is reproduced (varied) in the demi-semiquavers of the last two bars of p. 6, and in the bass of the passage beginning at the double bar of p. 7. The rest of the piece exhibits no new material, but the harmonies implied by the long scale with which it ends are worthy of notice as an instance of musical logic made to appear illogical by false notation. Reduced to lowest terms they are :



RAVEL

Ma Mère l'Oye. Cinq Pièces enfantines (1908).

The Orchestral Suite, 'Mother Goose', shows Ravel at his most attractive. It displays amazing mastery in its economy of material and resources. Every note tells, because every note is just in its right place; and the clarity of outline throughout, as in all Ravel's work, reveals a composer who seems to have learnt his principles of art from the Greeks. *Ma Mère l'Oye* is as far removed from the impressionism of *L'Après-Midi* as from what M. Roland Manuel terms 'la ridicule gravité romantique'.

The Suite is in five movements, each illustrating an incident from a fairy-tale. It is scored for two flutes (and piccolo), two oboes (and cor anglais), two clarinets, two bassoons (and double bassoon), two horns, timpani, triangle, cymbals, bass drum, gong, xylophone, bells, celesta, harp, and strings.

I. *Pavane de la Belle au Bois Dormant.*

The Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty was danced by the courtiers when the Princess had fallen asleep. The piece is only twenty bars long, and is a wonder of simple grace and delicacy. A four-bar phrase (2nd flute, against horn and violas *pizzicato*) is answered by another in which the 1st flute has the melody, over a chromatic figure on the 2nd flute, holding-notes on the oboe, clarinet, and bass strings (muted), and alternate natural notes and harmonics on the harp.

The clarinet takes the tune for the next four bars, accompanied by a counterpoint on the cor anglais and phrases handed from one group of strings to another. Then the first two phrases are repeated with fuller scoring, the second being allotted to strings and harp only.

II. *Petit Poucet.*

'Il croyait trouver aisément son chemin par le moyen de son pain, qu'il avait semé partout où il avait passé; mais il fut bien surpris lorsqu'il n'en put retrouver une seule miette; les oiseaux étaient venus, qui avaient tout mangé' (CHARLES PERRAULT).

Hop o' my Thumb ('Petit Poucet'), with his brothers, has been left in the forest by his father, in the hope that they will not return to burden the starving parents. This was happening for the second time. The first time, Hop o' my Thumb had taken some pebbles, and, having dropped them as he went, had guided his brothers safely home again by the track he had thus laid. This time, his father having ensured that the little boy had no pebbles, Hop had dropped fragments from a crust of bread he carried; but the birds ate them all, and the poor children were lost and starving.

Muted violins play ascending scales in thirds, the first four bars being written in $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{4}{4}$, and $\frac{5}{4}$ time; and a plaintive little tune on the oboe, answered by the cor anglais (over muted violas and 'cellos) expresses the wistful sadness of the children as they go through the forest. Then the strings, followed by the wood-wind, mount slowly through nearly three octaves to a climax marked by a triplet, and the cor anglais repeats its tune a fifth lower than before.

The twittering of birds is heard in a wonderful piece of orchestral colour—one solo violin in *glissando*

harmonics, two others with shakes, detached figures on the flutes, up-and-down *glissandi* for the remaining first violins, *tremolando* on the second violins; while the tune is given to the first bassoon and violas in sixths, over holding-notes for clarinet, bassoon, horn, and double-basses.

Strings and wood-wind as before rise to *mf*. The piccolo and a solo 'cello two octaves lower repeat the principal tune, and the music dies away at the recurrence of the four irregular bars ($\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{4}{4}$, and $\frac{5}{4}$) with which it began.

III. *Laideronnette, Impératrice des Pagodes.*

'Elle se déshabilla et se mit dans le bain. Aussitôt pagodes et pagodines se mirent à chanter et à jouer des instruments: tels avaient des théorbes faits d'une coquille de noix; tels avaient des violes faites d'une coquille d'amande; car il fallait bien proportionner les instruments à leur taille' (Mme D'AULNOY, *Serpentin vert*).

('She laid aside her robes and entered the bath. At once the pagodas began to sing and play: some had lutes made out of a nutshell; others, viols made out of an almond-shell; for the size of the instruments had to be in proportion to the size of the players.')

The music made by the animated 'pagodas' (both ladies and gentlemen) is a sparkling piece of fancy. Phrases from bassoon and horn, doubled by strings, over a shimmering gleam of muted strings and harp, introduce a merry tune on the piccolo in the Chinese pentatonic scale (without subdominant or leading-note), which is caught up by the flute, and leads to alternate bars *ff* and *pp* from the full orchestra, including celesta and cymbals. The oboe then plays two three-bar phrases over syncopated figures on the

strings; the flute, a four-bar phrase, answered by the cor anglais. Its last two bars (a group of four semiquavers given four times) are exchanged several times with the flute (over a string accompaniment), until a *glissando* on the celesta and strings brings the xylophone and leads to a climax.

A solemn phrase and notes on the gong herald the appearance of the Empress. These are repeated more gently by the clarinet and celesta over a long-sustained chord on the strings; and are followed by an expressive flute solo. After some repetition of the solemn phrase, the first part, beginning with the piccolo tune (now given to the celesta with more brilliant orchestration and combined with the solemn phrase), is repeated.

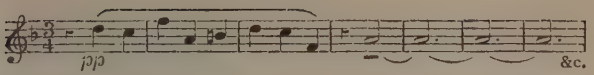
IV. *Les Entretiens de la Belle et de la Bête.*

'Quand je pense à votre bon cœur, vous ne me paraissez pas si laid.' — 'Oh! dame oui! j'ai le cœur bon, mais je suis un monstre.' — 'Il y a bien des hommes qui sont plus monstres que vous.' — 'Si j'avais de l'esprit, je vous ferais un grand compliment pour vous remercier, mais je ne suis qu'une bête.'...

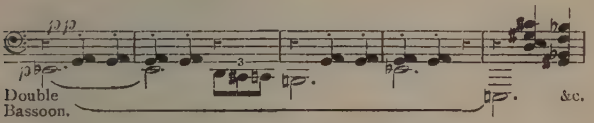
'La Belle, voulez-vous être ma femme?' — 'Non, la Bête!'...

— 'Je meurs content, puisque j'ai le plaisir de vous revoir encore une fois.' — 'Non, ma chère Bête, vous ne mourrez pas, vous vivrez pour devenir mon époux!'... La Bête avait disparu, et elle ne vit plus à ses pieds qu'un prince, plus beau que l'Amour, qui la remerciait d'avoir fini son enchantement (Mme Leprince de Beaumont).

The end of the story of 'Beauty and the Beast', so charmingly told above, is as charmingly illustrated. Beauty has an engaging theme in valse-rhythm—



given out by the clarinet over chords for flutes, harp and, later, strings, over a sustained bass for muted violas and harp-harmonics. After it has been fully developed, we hear the Beast :



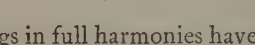
A cross-tremolo of the lower strings, beginning at the fifth bar, supports grinding harmonies on clarinets, bassoon, and harp; while horn, cymbals, and a roll on the bass drum add to the horrific effect. Beauty's alarm and the subsequent conversation are expressed by development of the previous material over (or under) fascinating harmonies of chromatic thirds. After the Beast's entreaties have risen to great urgency, the conversation proceeds more quietly: Beauty's theme in its original form and key is combined with that of the Beast, but the tension increases again to a *ff*.

There is a bar of silence; a harp-*glissando* expresses the transformation of Beast into Prince, and the Beast's theme, high up on a solo violin, begins a short Coda of exquisite orchestral colour.

V. *Le Jardin féerique.*

'The Enchanted Garden' belongs to the story of the Sleeping Beauty and Prince Charming, and is the scene of the awakening of the Princess by the Prince. This short movement—the orchestral score fills only

eight pages—seems to be more deeply felt than any of the others. It is in three sections (A-B-A), and A is built up from a slow rhythmic figure :



Strings in full harmonies have the theme for thirteen bars. Solos for clarinet, cor anglais, and flutes complete the section.

The use of the first bar of A (above) during the middle section gives unity to the movement. The celesta and solo strings combine in the melody, the accompaniment consisting mainly of full chords on the harp and wood-wind.

The first theme returns in a different melodic guise ; the instruments enter one after another ; horn, harp, and double-basses assert a sustained subdominant harmony, with added ninth ; as it gives place to the final tonic chord (with added sixth), the whole force is engaged. Bells peal, while a *tremolando* on divided strings with *glissandi* on celesta and harp bring the work to a gorgeous conclusion.

That a Suite which takes less than twenty minutes to perform should demand such full description is some testimony to its artistic interest ; but, to be properly appreciated, *Ma Mère l'Oye* must be closely studied and frequently heard ; for every hearing reveals fresh beauties. It is one of those rare musical achievements in which no listener who knows it well would wish for the alteration of a single note. It has been recorded by both Vocalion and H. M. V. Companies ; the former records omit No. IV.

Ma Mère l'Oye was produced as a ballet at the Théâtre des Arts, Paris, in 1912. To the Suite as it stands Ravel added Interludes and a Prelude.

Daphnis et Chloé.

Two months later came *Daphnis et Chloé* in ballet-form, extracts from it having been heard in the concert-room in the previous year. Memorable performances of it were given at Drury Lane in 1914 under M. Pierre Monteux, who conducted the original production. A letter from M. Monteux to the present writer (in July, 1914) gives the following interesting information: '*Daphnis*, dans sa forme primitive, a été composé et joué avec chœurs d'abord au Théâtre du Châtelet à Paris, saison 1912; puis repris dans la même forme au Théâtre des Champs-Elysées en 1913. Depuis, nous l'avons toujours joué sans les chœurs, version écrite par l'auteur lui-même.'

As the work is probably Ravel's orchestral *chef-d'œuvre*, and as performances of certain parts of it are becoming increasingly frequent, some account of the plot and of these extracts, obtainable in the form of a miniature score (Durand), will now be given.

The story of the Ballet is a Greek Pastoral. Daphnis and Chloe are shepherd and shepherdess; Dorcon, a country bumpkin, is the rival of Daphnis for Chloe's affections, while Lyceion, a shepherdess, fulfils a corresponding part in contesting with Chloe for the love of Daphnis. Chloe is carried off by pirates, but is rescued through the intervention of Pan, and restored to her lover. The 'Fragments symphoniques' to be described end the first part of the work and open the second.

The scene is laid on the borders of a sacred wood. At the entrance to a grotto stand the archaic statues of three nymphs, and farther away a large rock bears a vague likeness to the form of Pan, the nature-divinity and special patron of shepherds.

Chloe has been carried off by the pirates. Daphnis has discovered his loss, and, maddened by despair, has fallen senseless at the entrance to the grotto. It is here that the Symphonic Fragments begin.

(The orchestra employed is very large, and includes the Eoliphone—a 'wind-machine'. The italics below indicate the stage-directions.)

Nocturne.

A soft stroke on the gong and a *tremolo* of divided strings in many parts and strange harmony produce a weird and supernatural atmosphere.

A little flame suddenly shines out on the head of one of the nymphs. She becomes alive and descends from her pedestal. The second and third nymphs do likewise.

Notes on celesta and harp are followed each time by a cadenza on the flute for the first nymph, horn for the second, and clarinet for the third.

The nymphs unite, and begin a slow, mysterious dance.

Strings, *glissando* or *tremolando*, accompany sustained chords on wood-wind and muted brass, with a soft rustle from the Eoliphone. The music of the dance takes a more definite form; it opens with a theme for four flutes, echoing the sustained chords mentioned above.

They perceive Daphnis, bend over him, and wipe away his tears. They rouse him, lead him to the rock, and call on Pan.

The melody is given to two flutes and harp, *glissando*-harmonics on the strings expressing the surprise of the nymphs at the sight of the shepherd. The invocation of Pan recalls the theme of the dance.

Gradually the shape of the God becomes definite.

Sustained chords on the horns, a string-*tremolo*, and

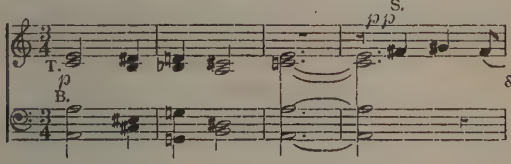
a roll on the bass drum lead to a *crescendo* from the whole orchestra as

Daphnis falls on his knees in prayer.
Darkness and silence.

Interlude.

Voices are heard behind the scenes, very remote at first. Trumpets in the distance. The voices come nearer.

The short choral episode (for unaccompanied voices, without words) begins thus :



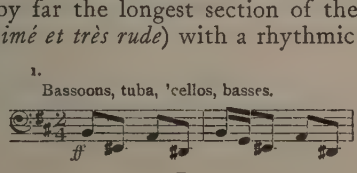
and the quotation includes most of its thematic material. Horn, trumpet, and a pedal-note on the 'cellos are gradually introduced, and the curtain rises on

The Pirates' Camp. The pirates are hurrying about, loaded with booty. The stage is dimly lighted until torches are brought, which finally shed a vivid glare upon the scene.

A short *crescendo* leads to the

Danse guerrière,

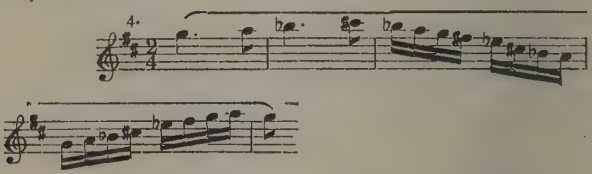
which is by far the longest section of the work. It begins (*animé et très rude*) with a rhythmic bass—



in which wood-wind and upper strings soon join with chromatic scale-groups of semiquavers. A climax is marked by a theme for bassoons and trombones:

No. 1 is now given to the wood-wind (as the melody), then to the trumpets, and again to the basses. Most of the foregoing material is heard again in varied form, and a frenzy of excitement is reached, marked by an emphatic phrase on the brass:

The time quickens and changes to $\frac{6}{8}$. Strings, softly *pizzicato*, and a figure of repeated quavers on muted trumpet leads to a piccolo solo in conflicting rhythm:



This is interrupted by No. 1, but is soon resumed by the clarinet, over an accompaniment of strings played *sautillé*, and harps.

Nos. 1 and 3 return, and, after the establishment of a rocking accompaniment figure (*un peu moins animé*), No. 4 is heard again with different orchestration. Nos. 1 (in the treble, with carillon) and 3 are also combined with the new accompaniment. The rest of

the movement employs no fresh material, but presents the four themes in a wonderful variety of orchestral guise.

The above analysis inevitably omits much that is worthy of close study, but the themes indicated should give sufficient help to a listener who wishes to find his way through a work whose brilliance is at first almost too dazzling for comprehension.

Works for Piano.

Pavane pour une Infante défunte (1899).

The 'Pavane for a dead Infanta' is an early work, and, although Ravel (quoted by M. Roland Manuel, *Maurice Ravel et son œuvre*) has subsequently found in it 'l'influence de Chabrier trop flagrante, et la forme assez pauvre', it manifests clearly enough some of the characteristics which go to the making of the *Sonatine*, whose date is six years later. It has long been Ravel's most popular work, and is published in all manner of arrangements.

The piece begins with a modal tune, tender and sad, thinly harmonized with chords from which the third is frequently absent. A second section, in a higher register, is more fully supported. Its final bars are treated diatonically, but on its immediate repetition they are given chromatic colour, and repeated with a harmonization based entirely on major ninths.

The first part is then repeated with fuller scoring. It leads to a third section (repeated with slight variation), in which a melody of considerable rhythmic freedom is repeated a fifth lower with harmonies mainly diatonic; but just before the end a chromatic scale in the inner parts adds an attractive richness.

The first part is then heard again with slightly more elaborate figuration, so that the form (as in so much of Ravel's work for the piano) is classical; it is a Rondo, in fact—A-B-A-C-A.

Sonatine (1905).

The Sonatina is less familiar than the work next to be described, though its Minuet holds a high place in the affections of Ravel's admirers. It is in three movements, the middle one fulfilling the dual function of slow movement and scherzo. The form is again purely classical.

I. *Modéré.* F♯ minor. $\frac{2}{4}$.

Exposition. The first subject begins modally (notice the drop of a fourth), and its bare, archaic effect is heightened by the fact that treble and bass at first move in octaves, while the left-hand part runs mainly in fifths. At the sixth bar major ninths form the basis of the harmonic treatment, and here the bridge-passage may be considered to begin.

The second subject is in two sections. The first is a tune of seven bars, of which the second repeats the first, the fifth and sixth repeat the third and fourth, and the seventh forms a cadence. Tenor and bass parts move in fifths, while the alto has descending semitones. The second section is simply the repetition of two figures of one bar each, the second of which (forming a Codetta) echoes the initial drop of a fourth with which the first subject began. The Exposition is immediately repeated, its first four bars being set an octave lower than at the opening. (The placing of the double-bars is a little deceptive.)

The Development begins with allusions to the first subject; its sixth and following bars are then quoted

with varied harmonization. At p. 4 (*a tempo*) the second subject is taken in hand, and developed over a pedal. The accompaniment now employs fourths (or the seventh made of two fourths superimposed) instead of the original fifths. At *animé* the development pivots, as it were, about an inner part which moves chromatically from F to G♯. A rhythmic figure used in the Exposition—

is modified and slowed down to lead to the

Recapitulation. This is exact in every detail (only one-and-a-half bars of the bridge-passage are transposed to lead to the orthodox reappearance of the second subject in the tonic), except that the second subject is given in F♯ major. Notice the exquisite cadence ending on a chord of the major ninth.

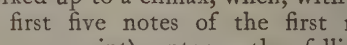
The minute analysis of so fragile a movement may seem to break a butterfly on the wheel, but it discloses both strength and weakness. The strength lies in the ease and precision of the classic formalism; the weakness in the Development, whose climax strains the delicate material unduly; and in the too exact repetition of the subjects and bridge. It is a movement with many points of beauty, but judged by classical standards it fails of success.

II. *Mouvement de Menuet.* D♭ major. $\frac{3}{8}$.

This movement is ingenuous and charming. The rising fifth with which its first theme begins recalls the falling fourth which opened the first movement. The theme is twelve bars in length, ends in F minor (with modal cadence), and is repeated.

Ten bars of development lead to a return which

suggests the first part for four bars, and then introduces a new rhythm—



which is worked up to a climax, when, with delightful effect, the first five notes of the first movement (altered at one point) enter; the falling fourth mentioned above is used for several bars to lead back the repetition of the first theme, which now ends in D♭ major. The development of the first part is now repeated, penetrated by a tonic pedal (C♯, enharmonic of D♭); but the suggestion of the first theme is omitted, and the theme whose rhythm was given above forms a brief Coda.

III. *Animé.* F♯ minor. $\frac{3}{4}$.

The Finale is the most extended of the three movements. Like the first movement, it is in Sonata form.

Exposition. Three bars of introduction, asserting the dominant, and establishing an accompaniment-figure of rushing semiquavers (tonic chord, second inversion, with added sixth), lead to the first subject. It begins with a *rising* fourth; its mode is Dorian (i.e. minor, with sharp sixth and flat seventh), and its iambic rhythm is reminiscent of Donner's 'Hedo! Heda! Hedo!' as he summons the storm-clouds (Wagner, *Das Rheingold*, scene 4). It may be said to end on the chord of the major seventh which plunges downward through bars 10 and 11.

The bridge-passage begins with a turbulent theme on a basis of triplet quavers instead of the previous semiquavers. The semiquavers, however, and the melody of the first subject (in the minor) quickly return, with a new theme in the bass:

The turbulent passage is now repeated in varied form, and a prolonged dominant leads to the second subject.

This consists of the first subject of the first movement, turned into $\frac{5}{4}$ and very gracefully harmonized. After some development of its falling fourth in free rhythm, the theme returns (*très marqué*) accompanied by solid common chords in a succession of whole tones. The falling fourth, and the triplets of the bridge-passage, bring the Exposition to its end at the fifth line of p. 10.

The DEVELOPMENT (which is rather long in proportion to the other parts) is based on an extended treatment of the first bar of the theme quoted above. It appears sometimes with semiquavers, sometimes with triplet quavers. The first subject is heard above and below it. At p. 12 the second subject is combined with it.

At bar 12 of this page the first subject begins to reassert itself, and with its appearance at p. 13, bar 10, in the tonic major key the RECAPITULATION may be said to begin. But the theme of the Development persists, and replaces the bridge-passage of the Exposition. The second subject is repeated according to plan, and its concluding bars are extended (in groups of three bars) to form a tempestuous Coda.

The ingenuity of rhythmic and contrapuntal technique shown in the Finale is high, and a more interesting first subject might have raised the movement to classic rank. As it is, it can hardly be accounted more than clever, but its technical features will repay

close examination, and it is essentially and effectively pianistic in treatment.

From the above analysis it might be conjectured that the interest of the Sonatina was technical rather than aesthetic, and it would be dishonest to deny that the composer's imagination seems hampered by his subjects and their developments. The absence of external idea may perhaps bear some part of the responsibility for this constriction, for the combination of classical form (more freely treated, it is true) with such an idea is in *Jeux d'Eau* triumphantly carried out.

On the other hand, it would be equally dishonest to deny that the first subject of the first movement, the unifying motto of the work, has an attractiveness which increases with each of its transformations, and that the grave beauty of the second subject, especially on its repetition (p. 5), shows the hand of a master, as does the gracious little Minuet, proportioned as perfectly as a terra-cotta figure from Tanagra.

Jeux d'Eau (1901).

It is not too much to say that Debussy and Ravel have produced the finest pianoforte-writing, as such, since Chopin, and *Jeux d'Eau* represents the supreme achievement of Ravel in this direction. As it also represents a most successful blend of classical form with modern idiom, it has been left to the last.

The music is prefaced by a quotation from Henri de Régnier, 'Dieu fluvial riant de l'eau qui le chatouille', and listening to the music it is easy to picture the statue of some ancient Greek river-god, his limbs bathed by the purling waters of an ornamental fountain.

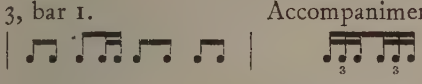
Harmonically, the piece exploits the chord of the

major seventh (and ninth); and sonata form is employed.

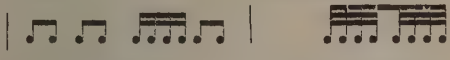
The first subject begins at once, and occupies six bars. Its opening bars are repeated, and with p. 2 may be considered as the bridge-passage.

The second subject begins on the dominant-seventh chord of the original key—a noteworthy feature—and contains several sections. The rhythmic outlines with which they respectively begin are as follows:

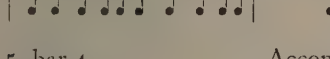
1. p. 3, bar 1. Accompaniment



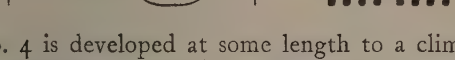
2. p. 3, bar 6. Accompaniment



3. (cf. 1), p. 4, bar 3. Accompaniment



4. p. 5, bar 4. Accompaniment



No. 4 is developed at some length to a climax on the 'black-note' chord (p. 10), followed by a *glissando* on the black notes which embraces almost the whole keyboard.

Pages 8 and 9 contain a short development of No. 4, and at p. 10 the Recapitulation begins. The first subject is heard over a pedal on the third of the scale. After these bars, however, echoes of the bridge-passage lead to a brilliant cadenza. The last two bars of p. 11 introduce No. 3, and at p. 12 they are repeated at a lower pitch over an accompaniment of chords of

the seventh (alternately minor and major). Then No. 1 recurs in its original form and key for two bars, emphasizing the dominant; a phrase borrowed from its fourth bar supplies material for the next three bars, which assert the subdominant; and, as the tonic is reached, recollections of the first half of No. 2 are heard, and the work finishes on a chord of the major seventh.

Jeux d'Eau is thus of interest from pianistic, harmonic, and formal standpoints; it has a certain monotony both of rhythm and of phrase, but that is in keeping with its subject. Beyond these considerations, however, which are the only ones capable of being recorded with any precision, there is much more that can be stated only in general terms.

But to dilate upon the loveliness of the sounds as they range up and down the keyboard, or upon the poetic conception which went to their making, would merely attempt to do for the listener what he would be much better employed in doing for himself—namely, forming his own impressions. If he goes to *Jeux d'Eau* expecting to find a work of genius, he will not be disappointed.

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